

Satellites May Be Communicative By Early 1963

Washington—(Science Service)—The Department of Defense will have an operational communications system using a satellite or satellites by early 1963, a technical director in the Army's Office of the Chief Signal Officer, told a space electronics and telemetry symposium meeting here.

Clifford D. May Jr. said the system would be improved over the experimental Courier communication satellite soon to be launched. But even this experimental model could handle the Army's bulk communications traffic at 1963's expected level. If ground stations were available to send and receive messages, May spoke at the Institute of Radio Engineers' Fifth Symposium on Space Electronics and Telemetry.

'Hypothetical System'
For the 1963 system, May projected a "hypothetical system" using four ground stations in Asmara in western Africa, and the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Hawaii. "As gateways they will distribute Courier messages throughout their respective areas by conventional means and act as area collection points for bulk traffic destined for another area via the satellite."

Courier would send down and receive messages for about six minutes over each station. Special, high-speed teletypewriters would be used in the station to gather and send information at a fast clip. Thus the satellite capacity could be upwards of 6 million information bits per orbit between any two ground stations.

Tied Into Unicom
The satellite system would be tied into Unicom (Universal Integrated Communications System) now being developed by the Army. Eventually Courier satellites, which repeat messages as they swing about the earth, would be replaced by Advent satellites.

Advents will have 24-hour orbits and thus seem to stand still above the equator. They will be high enough so that three or four could broadcast to each other and, thereby, to almost any part of the world—instantly.

Pseudomonas Infections Fatal To Burn Patients

Bethesda, Md. — (Science Service) — A gram-negative species of bacteria called pseudomonas is outstripping staphylococcus as a cause of fatal infection in burn patients.

Lieut. Col. Wilfred T. Tumbusch, Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Tex., told the First International Congress on Research in Burns here that pseudomonas organisms have become a major threat, where staphylococcus organisms have been declining in importance.

Col. Tumbusch said pseudomonas infections appear to be invariably fatal to burned patients.

598 Patients Studied
In a study of 598 burn patients treated at Brooke between 1954 and 1959, Col. Tumbusch said 77 died of infection. He said either Staphylococcus aureus (golden staph) or Pseudomonas aeruginosa (an organism that produces blue pus) or both were found in the wounds of 66 of these patients.

Although there were 17 survivors of severe burns with septicemia (blood poisoning) in the five-year period, there were no survivors of Pseudomonas septicemia. Death occurred in spite of prompt therapy with Polymixin B and colistin sulfate, the most effective antibiotics against the pseudomonas organism.

Col. Tumbusch said pseudomonas organisms have been found increasingly in burn surfaces since 1954, and since 1956 have been the most common organisms in burn wound cultures.

Cause Not Known
He said the cause of the increase is not known. He suggested that the increase of pseudomonas septicemia and the fall of staph infections "may represent normal cycles of propagation of the species, and a return to the previous ratios may be forthcoming."

"If the trend, however, is real, invasion by Staphylococcus aureus, which has been 74 per cent fatal, is being replaced by pseudomonas invasion, which has been lethal in all patients," he said.

Col. Tumbusch believes that in a fatal burn case in which the patient has an infection the infection is the cause of death. He said hope for improvement in this situation lies in the control of the effects of gram-negative bacteria infection.

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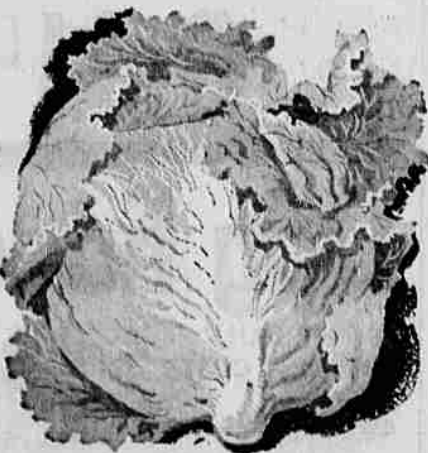
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