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Crack Medical Team Prepared to Check Space Personnel for 'Moon Germs'

EVEN THE SNIFFLES WILL BE WATCHED

Surveillance of 700 Aides to Supplement Quarantine of Apollo Astronauts

By HAROLD M. SCHMUCK Jr.
Special to The New York Times

HOUSTON, July 23 — An agent of the country's top corps of medical detectives has been assigned here to warn the cause of every illness that occurs during the next three weeks, among 700 people.

The physician was sent here from the National Communicable Disease Center in Atlanta to assist doctors of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The NASA doctors have set up a special health surveillance program to cover everyone who might conceivably be contaminated by material from the space.

It will cover all the men and women who work in, or visit, the Lunar Receiving Laboratory. The building will house the Apollo 11 crew and their collection of lunar rocks, sand and dust.

Conceivably, the building might be contaminated by dangerous moon germs, if such unlikely things exist and if some of them elude the elaborate quarantine precautions already in effect.

It is far more likely that some worker in the building will fall ill from a natural earthly cause. This might cause public alarm because of the great publicity centered on the astronauts' quarantine.

Thus, both NASA and the Communicable Disease Center think it imperative that they know the facts about every health problem that might emerge.

"The purpose is to stay one step ahead of anything that might happen," said Dr. George F. Brooks, of the disease center's epidemic intelligence service.

He will work closely with Dr. W. W. Kemmerer, who is manager of quarantine at the Lunar Receiving Laboratory. In an interview they said the main surveillance emphasis will be on the 250 people who work in the laboratory area when the lunar samples are to be examined.

Everyone else who frequents the building will also be under scrutiny. Blood samples of each have already been obtained and the serum has been frozen and stored for later analysis.

Even Sniffles Are Suspect

All persons who become ill—even sniffles or a sore throat—has been asked to report to

the Manned Spacecraft Center's occupational medicine clinic. The same surveillance is being run on workers in another building unconnected with the lunar samples, so that the doctors will have some clear idea of the illnesses, if any, that are "going around."

Dr. Brooks said he would have liked to canvass the infectious-disease pattern in the workers' home communities, but this seems impossible because they come from all over the Houston region.

Dr. Brooks' organization, the epidemic intelligence service, is composed of 100 young Public Health Service officers. About half are stationed at the Communicable Disease Center in Atlanta; the rest are scattered throughout the United States.

All are available to go anywhere in the world on a moment's notice to help local health authorities cope with an epidemic or find the cause of any mysterious outbreak. They get mostly help from state, community and foreign governments.

Dr. Alexander D. Lanphier, chief of the epidemiology program of the Atlanta center, set up the epidemic service corps about 18 years ago. He said recently that he could put one of his men anywhere in the United States in 12 hours and anywhere in the world in 36 hours.

They take pride in the rapidity and accuracy with which they can find and prove the cause of a disease outbreak. The corps was formed during the Korean war partly because of concern over the possibility of a germ-warfare attack against the United States.

The corps' first great case came in 1955, when some children who had received vaccine against polio developed the disease.

This outbreak had the makings of a national panic because millions of children all over the country were receiving vaccine from several manufacturers. The investigators from Atlanta helped prevent a halt in the whole national vaccine program by proving that only two batches of vaccine from one company—the Cutter Laboratories—were at fault.

One of the corps' most baffling cases came two years ago when many workers in a single building in Pontiac, Mich., became acutely ill for no readily discernible reason.

During a study in the course of which all the investigators also fell ill, the cause was traced to the building's air-conditioning system. The doctors are convinced the system was sending germ-laden moist-air particles into the air—something public-health officials say they have never en-

Wash. Post
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States Win Authority To Cut Back Medicaid

By Eva Edstrom
Washington Post Staff Writer

States will be able to cut back on certain Medicaid services but will not be allowed to reduce overall Medicaid spending under amendments passed by a vote 54-41 in the House yesterday.

The amendments, which now will be sent to the White House for signing into law, were attacked by Rep. Phillip Burton (D-Calif.) for representing "potentially a significant step backward."

But Rep. Wilbur D. Mills (D-Ark.), chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, said the legislation does "not infringe on the program" while allowing the states "more freedom to determine their own needs."

The amendments, which previously had been tacked onto a minor House bill by the Senate, were the result of a compromise worked out by Senate liberals. They had opposed more stringent Medicaid cuts initially sought by the Senate Finance Committee.

For example, the amendments do now allow the states to eliminate any of the five basic Medicaid services as the Committee originally planned.

The services for the medically needy include in-patient hospital care, out-patient care, nursing home care, doctors' services, and laboratory and X-ray services.

Furthermore, the liberals wrote in certain safeguards an amendment that permits states to reduce or eliminate other services, such as payments for drugs or dentistry.

This can be done only if Medicaid spending below current levels. Also, the funds must aid patients and not be used to increase payments to nursing homes, doctors, hospitals and other provider of care.

In addition, the amendments extend from 1975 to 1977 the time allowed states to provide comprehensive health care services for all persons who cannot afford them.

This provision for comprehensive care would have been enacted entirely by the Senate Finance Committee, which was responding to pressure from states that are facing a financial crisis because of soaring Medicaid costs.

Wash. Daily News
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Warning total school desegregation could cause "massive civil disobedience," Louisiana Gov. John McKeithen has called on President Nixon to relax integration guidelines.

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F.D.A. Chief Doubts Data Linking Fats to Heart Disease

WASHINGTON, July 23 (AP)—Herbert L. Ley Jr., Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, testified Tuesday that "there is very little scientific evidence" clearly linking a fatty diet with heart disease.

He told the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs that evidence of a connection between smoking and illnesses such as lung cancer "is of much more concrete nature" than that between fats and heart trouble.

"There is no sound scientific evidence here," Mr. Ley said. "The smoking evidence is, in a statistical sense, much more conclusive."

Last Friday, E. Cowles Andrews, former president of the American Heart Association, told the committee of definite links between heart disease and high cholesterol levels from fatty diets.

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The decision was handed down early today and was first announced at a meeting of the Houston school board this afternoon.

A Quick Decision

The decision came much more quickly than had been expected. It followed by only two days the completion of a hearing at which attorneys for the Government and the school board presented their arguments.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare went into court more than a year ago in an attempt to speed up Houston's desegregation process, saying at the time that the vast majority of the city's 231 elementary, junior high and high schools had populations of more than 95 per cent white or Negro students.

A suit has been in the courts, however, since 1956, when a Negro woman filed in behalf of her 9-year-old daughter, alleging that she was the victim of a poor education system.