

The Voice

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"Dedicated to the promotion of the cultural, social and spiritual life of a great people."

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EDITORIALS

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are being stricken. In the past, roughly 15% of all patients were over 15 years old; now 25% are above that age. Although the age group most often hit is still 5 to 9, older people tend to have more serious attacks. And naturally, with the increase in the number of wage earners afflicted, more serious economic disruption results in the family.

It is now believed that polio is a very widespread infection, with only the rare person showing symptoms of the clinical disease. Several recent surveys show that more than 80% of persons over 15 years of age have specific polio anti-bodies in their blood, indicating previous infection with polio virus.

This mass of data, unearthed by research financed by the March of Dimes, is being put into the service of mankind. With the

March of Dimes

BY DR. R. G. GUSTAVSON

(Editor's Note: To bring our readers up to date on the most recent progress in the fight against infantile paralysis, The Voice will publish a series of articles especially written by Dr. Gustavson. This is the third of the series. The next article will appear next week.)

We reported earlier in this series that the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis has invested \$27,300,000 on the most massive scientific research and training program ever launched by a voluntary agency against a single disease. Grants and appropriations have been made for 805 specific research and professional education projects in 123 institutions.

While no practicable preventive vaccine or cure has been developed as yet to banish the scourge of polio, substantial strides have been made and an amazing library of information about polio has been amassed.

Constant study of this data by many scientists in varied fields will inevitably result in the conquest of infantile paralysis. However, the struggle is a formidable one because of the shiftiness of our opponent. Unlike smallpox, for instance, polio follows no set strategy. Polio can't be relied upon to act in a predictable way.

For one thing, there is not just one polio virus. There are at least 3 groups of them, perhaps more. Science needs a "shot-gun" vaccine to blast this multiple enemy.

Polio used to be considered a "summer disease." In recent years, however, the peak weeks of incidence have occurred in the autumn and there have been as many cases after the second week in September as in all the months before. In 1950, the week ending

September 23 saw the highest incidence both nationally and in Nebraska. For example, one single treatment center—the Children's Memorial Hospital in Omaha—admitted 35 polio patients in September alone.

Recently, a larger number of polio cases has been reported for every month of the year than once was true.

Another thing. Years with a high incidence of cases used to be followed by light years. But no more. 1948 saw 27,902 cases; 1949 reported 42,375 cases; there were over 33,000 cases in 1950. This has placed an unrelenting financial load upon the chapters of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. In Nebraska we had 717 cases in 1948; 683 in 1949; and at least 456 in 1950.

Then, too, an analysis of figures shows that more and more adults

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The President Speaks

Attention 5th Dist. Laymen

An urgent meeting is called for Sunday Feb. 11, 1951 in Kansas City, Kansas. The meeting will be held at 1520 North 5th street at 2:00 p.m. sharp.

Preparations will be made for the official executive board meeting to be held at Los Angeles, California, Feb. 20, 1951.

faith and support of the public, polio will be conquered!

(Next week Dr. Gustavson will discuss the March of Dimes.)

Every one is urged to attend. Business of importance. George Jones, District President

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