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B.P.I.

HCO BULLETIN OF NOVEMBER 18, 1959.

The following article appeared in the November issue of The Digest of World Reading. It is reproduced here for your reading entertainment.

"Yes, Push-Button People"

"For such a formidable job as "brain control" the apparatus is disarmingly simple: A bundle of ultra-thin, steel wires is sunk permanently through a hole in the skull into the brain. On the top of the head, the bundles end in a tiny electrical plate outlet.

Here, Dr. Jose Delgado of Yale's School of Medicine plugs in "directions" - mild electrical currents. This stimulation is below the threshold of sensation, but it makes cats and monkeys "perform like electrical toys" and evokes in humans feelings of fear, friendship, and the memory of events long forgotten.

For ten years now, Delgado and his associates have been using electrodes to survey the motor cortex, the frontal and temporal lobes, and other regions of the brain. What has emerged is a map of the brain which, startlingly, resembles the phrenologist's version. Using this map, Delgado can trigger complex reactions: Animals have been made to yawn, sneeze, shake their heads, and hop about; lackadaisical cats have been turned into spitting, hissing aggressors; indifferent monkeys have been stimulated by electric current into a state of aroused sexuality.

Further studies with human patients who are mental cases or epilepsy victims, Delgado told the International Congress of Physiological Sciences' meeting last month in Buenos Aires, seem to "support the distasteful conclusion that motion, emotion, and behavior can be directed by electrical forces and that humans can be controlled like robots by push buttons."

But possibilities of such "electronic command" have to be qualified, Delgado added reassuringly. Brain stimulation, he concluded, may be able to call forth an automatic (in a metaphysician's term, an unwilling) response, "but it cannot change the basic characteristics of the experimental subject." Fortunately, for those who worry about freedom of the spirit, the brain seems too complex for man to harness in the foreseeable future."

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Congratulations H.A.S.I. - South Africa! To celebrate its second birthday Johannesburg made two £1,000 weeks in a row.

L. RON HUBBARD.