

+ June 13, 1972
Honolulu

Dr. George von Bekesy,

Nobel Prize Winner

Dr. George von Bekesy, 73, a physicist who received the Nobel Prize in medicine for his research on the human ear, died Tuesday in Honolulu where he was a professor of sensory sciences at the University of Hawaii.

The Hungarian-born sci-

entist, who became an American citizen, was a senior research fellow in psychophysics at Harvard University when he won the coveted award in 1961.

A man who devoted his entire life to science and research, Dr. von Bekesy located the pitch organ in the

cochlea, a part of the inner ear shaped like a snail's shell. Through this, he was able to show how the ear differentiates sounds of different pitch.

His findings were considered a scientific basis for advances in the treatment of deafness and a tremendous contribution to the knowledge of acoustics.

Born in Budapest, Dr. von Bekesy was a graduate of the University of Budapest. He worked for the Royal Hungarian Institute for Research in Telegraphy there and then went to Stockholm to continue experiments for the Royal Institute of Technology and the Royal Caroline Medico-Chirurgical Institute. He joined Harvard as a research lecturer in 1947.

The only earned degree he had was a doctoral degree in physics, but he also had received honorary doctor of medicine degrees



GEORGE von BEKESY

from the University of Muenster and the University of Bern. There were also honorary degrees from Wilhelm University and the University of Pennsylvania as well as numerous prizes, grants and awards.