



BLASTING OFF amid cloud of smoke from its jet assisted takeoff bottles, Navy's surface-to-surface guided missile Regulus leaves launching platform aboard the submarine Tunny during operations of the California coast. (International Soundphoto)

Ripple Rock Ship Menace Will Be Blasted by Canada

Washington—(U.P.)—Tons of high explosive will remove a shipping peril along the inside passage to Alaska if a Canadian plan succeeds.

The target is Ripple Rock, a twin-knobbed reef on which more than a hundred vessels have foundered with a toll of scores of lives.

Ripple Rock is at the southern end of Seymour Narrows in the Strait of Georgia between British Columbia and Vancouver Island. Seamen have tagged it with a number of names: "the Fang," "the Barb," "the Lurking Jackal."

Government plans for destroying the reef began last fall. But the actual blast will not be heard until late 1957 or early 1958.

Engineers have learned that blasting Ripple Rock is no ordinary task. Turbulent currents and tides defeated two previous attempts to remove the obstacle by drilling and blasting from an anchored barge.

Many Solutions

For years' officials have been beseiged with ideas from eager amateurs. Canadians and foreigners, engineers, scientists, laborers and daydreamers have offered solutions. Some would attack the rock with Navy torpedoes, plaster it with mortar shells or vaporize it with an atomic bomb.

The prevailing plan is to bore from below, place explosives in prepared slots and rip it apart.

The assault calls for a 500-foot shaft on neighboring Maud Island. From this shaft a 2,370-foot tunnel will be excavated to connect with the reef. The tunnel will provide means for placing water and vapor-proof charges for detonation.

Elaborate safety precautions have been devised. Advance warnings will go to persons in danger areas. Seismic recording apparatus will check the magnitude of earth tremors. And the blast will be timed to do minimum damage to fish.

The explosion is expected to reduce Ripple Rock by about 40 feet. This depth will provide clearance for vessels swept in on the strong tidal currents. Now, at low tide, the reef's pinnacles reach to within a few feet of the surface. They defy direct passage by anything but low-draft shipping.

Traffic Jam

The current "traffic jam" at each end of the Seymour Narrows was described by a Canadian engineer. He said ships wait "like cars on Main Street at a red light, and at the right moment they all dart through from both sides, causing a heavy pileup." The yearly time lost by ships and barges forced to lie idle for long periods is substantial and the monetary loss is heavy.

Another consideration motivates removal of the reef. In an emergency, United States and Canadian shipping to far-north bases and supply depots would be held up or actually imperiled.

Ladino Clover Commission Desired

Salem—(U.P.)—State Agriculture Director J. F. Short said today a commodity commission for Oregon ladino clover growers is desirable on the basis of hearings held recently in major growing areas.

Short said times and places for a growers' referendum on whether or not to form a clover commission will be announced later.

Hearings were held last month in Madras and Medford. Most of the ladino clover acreage in Oregon is in Jefferson county, with smaller acreage in Josephine and Jackson counties and in the Willamette valley.

Growers said a commission was desirable to organize advertising and promotion programs, promote research and study federal and state legislation which have an effect on the clover industry in Oregon.

Japanese Construction Leaders To Visit U.S.

Tokyo—(U.P.)—Thirteen representatives of Japan's building construction industry leave for the United States Thursday for a 6-week study tour, the U.S. Embassy announced today.

The group will visit San Francisco, Phoenix, Ariz., Kansas City, Chicago, Washington and New York to observe construction methods, management and labor administration.

Only Doing Duty, Neuberger Says

Washington—(U.P.)—Sen. Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore.) said today that he and Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) were only doing their duty in asking for an investigation of the proposed merger of Long-Bell Lumber Co. and International Paper Co.

Neuberger said he regretted the recent attack on the two senators by the Portland Chamber of Commerce which said the Morse-Neuberger action would not be appreciated by workers who would find employment in mills to be built by the merged firms.

The senator said "I should like to state in reply that it has been the policy of the federal government for over 50 years to inquire into any situation where monopoly might restrain competition."

He added that "compliance with federal anti-trust statutes should not present a barrier to Oregon industrial growth."

Neuberger challenged the chamber to "inquire into the wisdom" of its stand in favor of partnership power which Neuberger claimed would drive industry out of the state because of its higher cost.

Hearing Held on Unemployment Claims

Fifteen women who were denied unemployment compensation claims at the Medford office of the Oregon State Employment service appeared Tuesday at a hearing before representatives of the service from Salem. They were represented by Medford Attorney Stanley C. Jones Jr.

Although the claims involved only a "very small amount," Jones said the results of the hearings would be significant because of a new state law providing that seasonal employees no longer be considered "seasonal."

The state office is expected to act on the hearings within 10 days to two weeks, Jones said.

The U.S. uses about one-half the world supply of tin.

SCIENCE AT WORK

By DELOS SMITH
United Press Science Editor

New York—(U.P.)—Dr. Charles G. Carpenter, who is a scientific authority on this subject, thinks most people wonder how boy garter snakes find girl garter snakes (and vice versa) when spring comes.

Being snakes, they are very close to the ground. There's a lot of vegetation around, forming obstructions to direct vision. In this low-down world, the snakes just can't meet by seeing one another first.

Yet, Dr. Carpenter figured, approximately 65 per cent of female garter snakes encounter the males every spring. The figure isn't as high as it is for other creatures, but, considering the handicaps, it's good. Here's how garter snakes do it, according to the scientist:

"Garter snake populations are much larger than would be suspected, exceeding 10 individuals per acre in suitable habits. Hibernating snakes tend to congregate in favorable areas, and when they emerge in the spring, ready to mate, they are already in close proximity."

Summer Hatching
"Of primary importance is the ability of the male to follow the trail of scent left by the female in the spring. I have watched males follow the exact path taken by previously released females, making right-angle turns at the proper points."

The male garter snake courts the female, when he overtakes her, by rubbing the under side of his chin over her back. But mating does not always occur in the spring; sometimes it is in the fall, just before hibernation. In that case, there are no young until spring—nature miraculously holds the process in a state of chemical suspension.

The young resulting from spring mating are hatched in late summer, and there is a record of one garter snake—a very large one—becoming the mother of 80 at the same time. Dr. Carpenter said, however that the average litter is about 18. In common with the water snakes and the rattlesnake, the female garter snake retains her eggs in her body until they hatch.

"Newborn garter snakes," continued Dr. Carpenter "are completely independent and begin to scatter soon after birth, perhaps

never again to come in contact with their mother. Juveniles look and behave like miniatures of their parents—tongues flicker and eyes are alert." And they grow very rapidly, doubling their length in a year.

But garter snakes never wander very far from the place where they were hatched. Dr. Carpenter caught and marked more than 1,500 of them, so he'd recognize individuals each time he caught them again. They lived out their lives in areas of no more than two or three acres.

In this particular locale of 48 acres, he calculated the garter snake population at 10 per acre. But there were enough snakes of other kinds to raise the total snake population to 20 an acre.

"One does not usually see snakes in this abundance," he said. "As a matter of fact an experienced observer searching this area for an entire day would probably be fortunate to find 20 or 30 snakes. Most of the population either would be inactive and well hidden or would find cover before being noticed."

The American Association for the Advancement of Science published Dr. Carpenter's intimate facts concerning garter snakes because it is the best known of American snakes. He is assistant professor of zoology and curator of reptiles and mammals at the University of Oklahoma.

Kefauver Campaigns For Montana Votes

Great Falls, Mont.—(U.P.)—Sen. Estes Kefauver arrived here today fresh from a presidential preference primary victory in Minnesota to bid for Montana's 16 Democratic National Convention votes.

The Tennessee Democrat said he believed one of the most significant results of his showing in Minnesota's primary was that "I polled more votes than President Eisenhower."

Kefauver addresses a Democratic dinner tonight and then leaves for San Francisco where he will spend five days in California in an effort to get California's Democratic National Convention votes.

Night Bus Service In Salem May End

Salem—(U.P.)—Carl Wendt, manager of Salem's city transit lines, said today it was probable that a night bus service would end in the city April 1.

He said that despite publicity given to the line's financial plight, patronage fell off at an increased rate during February.

The city council is scheduled to take action next Monday on a bill to permit the line to dis-

continue most night bus runs. Councilmen called off a proposed city-wide questionnaire on transit problems and asked instead that citizens with views on the subject write city hall.

Salem Chamber of Commerce officials favor a subsidy to keep the night buses rolling.

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Canadian Clams Harvested By 'Conservation' Machine

Washington—(U.P.)—Clam digging, long synonymous with back-breaking labor, is being mechanized in Canada's Maritime Provinces.

Elimination of human toil, however, is not the principle object at present of the labor-saving device. The machine is expected to reduce the toll of young clams that results from hand digging.

The digger is about 90 per cent efficient in taking small clams but less so in gathering large ones. Made for the Canadian Department of Fisheries, it is being tested as a device for removing smaller specimens from poor growing areas into places where breeding methods can be scientifically studied.

Made Indian Money
The salt-water clam has been

an important food source for centuries. Indians of the North Atlantic coast gave the name quahog to one edible hard-shell variety. Belts from quahog shells were respected treaty symbols. Shell fragments, polished and rounded, were strung into ornamental beads, and shells were passed as money by the tribes.

Another popular variety, the pismo clam, is found on sandy beaches of the West Coast. Commercial digging has greatly reduced their numbers. They require from four to seven years to reach marketable age.

Razor clams are widely favored for their flavor. Found in shallow sand banks between tide marks, they are dug for family and commercial use. Living vertically in the sand, the knife-shaped clams feed with part of the shell thrust above the surface. Many are found along North America's Pacific coast.

Shallow, muddy bottoms are preferred by soft-shell clams. Tasty and popular, they are also known as steamer clams and long clams. They have been introduced into the San Francisco Bay area. The variety is abundant along the Atlantic Coast.

Clams are attractive to fish and gulls as well as to people. Fishes crush the shells with their jaws and swallow smaller clams whole. Gulls, after seizing a clam, ascend 50 to 100 feet and drop the shellfish. Striking the beach, the shell usually breaks, particularly if it lands sideways. A fatal instinct of the clam aids its enemies. When alarmed, it contracts the muscles so strongly that a strain is imposed on the shell, leaving it vulnerable even to a slight blow.

Clams Move Slowly
The clam has feeble powers of locomotion. They move over sand or mud by extending and contracting foot muscles, causing the single foot to act as a spring. Some species can leap 12 inches in this manner.

Long attrition has depleted supplies of clams, affecting particularly beds of New England and Long Island. Predatory green crabs have made incursions into the clam beds off Maine and caused some destruction. Fences are being erected to keep out the intruders.

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