

Impossible Task of Building DEW Line Across Wastes of Arctic Progressing

Editor's note: Building a string of radar bases in the frozen wastes of the Arctic is an "impossible" task—but the United States and Canada are doing it. Charles Corddry, U.P. Washington correspondent who covers the Defense Department, was in the first group of newsmen allowed to tour the 1000-mile-long "Dew Line" of Arctic radar stations. In the following dispatch, datelined Yellowknife, Canada, he tells how the biggest Arctic construction job of all time is being carried out against incredible obstacles.

By CHARLES CORDDRY
Yellowknife, N.W.T., Canada—(U.P.) "We didn't tell the pilots and airmen it was impossible, so they went ahead and did it," said Maj. Gen. Chester E. McCarty, U. S. 18th Air Force commander.

Capt. R. F. Pryce of the Military Sea Transportation Service added: "The Russians must have been shocked to see 126 ships go up there and bust the Arctic wide open."

The gargantuan task of pouring construction equipment and supplies into the Dew Line thus was summarized for reporters leaving New York a few days ago on a tour of the 3000-mile radar warning net at the top of the continent.

Statistics Impressive
The statistics are impressive—128,000 short tons by water, 50,000 by air and 3500 by over-snow sled-train in 1955—and

tens of thousands more this year. But they take on real meaning only after one experiences the subzero temperatures and swirling snow, lands on ice strips carved on frozen lakes, witnesses the northland's poverty of navigation and communication aids, and comes to roost at refueling stops like the ones here and at remote Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island.

The problem is driven home further when the freezing cold causes a succession of minor mechanical troubles to grip a giant C124 Globemaster, some of them delaying it for two days, as happened to the one in which 31 U. S. and Canadian newsmen toured the line.

Greatest Operation
The Dew Line construction job, the biggest Arctic operation of all time, has been likened in its immensity to the building of the Great Wall of China. A little more than a year ago, there was nothing but snow and ice and desolation where hordes of men now work and vehicles move and airplanes drone.

Of all the resources and materials needed, only gravel and water from melted ice and natural gas in Alaska were available in this frigid wasteland.

Everything else—tractors, other heavy equipment, food, aviation gas, diesel oil, recreation facilities, the simplest necessities of life—had to be brought in by air and water transport.

Many Sites Opened
Many sites were opened by four-man teams that went in by small ski-fitted plane and got supplies by parachute drops. Even eight-ton tractors were dropped so they could plow the snow off frozen lakes and from runways for big supply planes. Civilian and military planes sketched over Baffinland's treacherous mountains, Northern Canada's flat, foggy terrain and the serrated mountains of Alaska's Brooks Range. Except for about 260 Eskimos employed on "the line," all labor forces were brought over vast distances from Canadian, American and overseas ports.

New Airlift Underway
The big 1956 airlift is now under way. And the American and Canadian navies are preparing again for the brief August-September period when the Foxe Basin west of Baffin Island and the Beaufort Sea north of Alaska and the Yukon territory are free enough of ice for navigation. The Army is getting ready its stevedoring teams—3000 men were employed last year—to unload equipment over the rocky beaches.

This year, there is this tremendous advantage: They have been there before.

One of the great unknown quantities last year was the ice landing. There were no air strips on the ground and there was no way to get badly needed 20-ton tractors to Dew Line sites but to transport them in C124 Globemasters.

So snow was cleared from lakes frozen to depths of six feet, old fuel cans were used to mark off runways and the Globemasters came down weighing 168,000 pounds. Several hundred such landings were made. The equipment needed to build gravel runways, roads and perform other earth-moving jobs was delivered.

Lighter weight materials were flown by commercial carriers, using an amazing variety of aircraft including one old German Junker, 1931 vintage. In the 1955 period, commercial carriers had 18 accidents with 15 lives lost and the U. S. Air Force had four with no lives lost.

Administration Fears Conflict
Washington—(U.P.)—The Eisenhower administration fears that Israel and her Arab neighbors may "stumble into war" even though neither side wants a conflict nor is fully mobilized for one.

They fear that with border incidents mounting, hot-headed militarists on either side might touch off full-scale fighting. This is the reason Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, on President Eisenhower's instructions, alerted congressional leaders Tuesday to a possible request for authority to use U. S. forces if full war breaks out in the Middle East.

Strategists see the situation this way: There is no big buildup of military forces suggesting aggression in the Middle East. Egypt has not yet mastered arms it has received from the Soviet bloc. Israel and the Arab states don't want war. But the current Israeli-Egyptian fighting continues despite efforts to stop it. Action leads to counter-action. Tempers rise higher until, as one American official said, "they could stumble into war in an hour's time."

Klamath Considering City Manager Plan
Klamath Falls—(U.P.)—Herbert Kehrli, director of the bureau of municipal research and service of the League of Oregon Cities, conferred with a city committee Tuesday on the proposed revision of the city charter with an eye toward possible change to the manager plan of city government.

A Nichol's Worth of . . . Comment On This and That

By HARMAN W. NICHOLS
United Press Feature Writer



Harman Nichols

Washington—(U.P.)—With a new ink on the market today, the modern crook is going to have a rough time making a dishonest living.

This ink, perfected by a pen company, defies the scoundrel. Say you are the scoundrel. You have a check for \$5000. You rub it out and change the 500 to 10 times its size and do the same on the line where you put an "no-100."

Well, with the new ink any expert can turn on the black or ultraviolet light, and a luminescent additive gives a workman when exposed the original writing shows up fine.

Banks are interested. So are other catchers of forgers. **Ink is Ancient**
Which brings up the subject of how did ink really start? Nobody knows really, but a little research at the Library of Congress and other places is of more than considerable interest.

The Chinese claim to have invented the stuff 4500 years ago. But the first mention of it is said in most books to run back to the 6th century B.C., back to Jeremiah in the Latin Vulgate written by St. Jerome about 380 A.D. Jeremiah is quoted as "writing with ink."

Incidentally, not all of the writing fluids across the centuries have been made by man. One was made by a fish. It was the "inky" fluid shot out by the cuttlefish to hide himself from his natural enemies while fleeing. The Spartans following the fish, captured the protective juice and put it to work in the writing business.

The golden days of Rome, and ahead of it Greece, were said to have been written in ink. Horace, Roman poet, mentioned the word "ink" in his Odes.

Red for Royalty
Pliny, the Roman historian, wrote that "ink is made of soot with burnt resin or pitch, x x x Wormwood preserves manuscripts from mice."

In ancient Egypt, inks were made of a fine powder of carbon stirred with gum water to keep it in "suspension." Often copper preparations were used for dyes.

Most of the early inks were black or red. Writing in gold, though, was called "chryso-graphy." It was a profession in itself in the days of the "lower" Roman Empire.

In about the First Century B. C., red inks were reserved for the exclusive use of emperors, their sons and other close kin.

Today, a person can get ink that matches the gloves or hat or nail polish of midday or the suit of the man.

Most inks today are 98 per cent water. And the new kind that may throw the crook out

Oil Tank Truck, Train Collision Fatal To Two

Wauchula, Fla.—(U.P.)—An oil tank truck collided with a passenger train near here yesterday and at least two persons were killed in the fiery explosion.

The three-car train was en route to Boca Grande, Fla., on the lower Gulf Coast, when the accident occurred at tiny Fort Green, some 10 miles west of here.

The train was enveloped in flames.

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