

X-15 Easily Modified To Carry Man on First Flight To Outer Space

Current Middle East Situation Dates Back To Refusal of Loan

By ELMER C. WALZER
UPI Financial Editor

New York—(UPI)—There's as much water as there is oil in this Middle East imbroglio.

The current situation dates back to two years ago when the United States turned down a big loan to finance construction of a new dam in Egypt to raise the level of the Nile for wider use of irrigation and offset the buildup of silt of the centuries.

When the loan was refused, Nasser became angry and retaliated. He took over the Suez Canal and eventually blocked it with sunken ships. Then came a long period when the U.S. supplied Europe with oil to make up for the oil that ordinarily would have come through the canal.

And now comes the coup in Iraq with a group favorable to Nasser in control.

Iraq is the site of what was once the rich country of Mesopotamia. It is no longer rich because the canals built several thousand years ago by the Sumerians were destroyed in later invasions by Mongols from the North.

Oil-Water Mix

When Mesopotamia was irrigated it was a fertile area. It was the cradle of civilization, according to the historians—possibly the site of the Garden of Eden. Now it is mostly desert and the nation was planning to use some of its vast oil monies to do some irrigating again.

Of course, what the world is thinking about mainly in the Middle East is oil and not water. Water might provide arable land and make the nomadic tribes settle down and do some farming, but the oil is what keeps Europe's wheels spinning.

Wall Street isn't too much worried over the outcome of the oil situation.

L. O. Hooper, analyst for W. A. Hutton & Co., points out that Nasser is no Communist and he adds the Communists do not have a market for oil.

About the worst that might come could be a grab by the Middle East nations of more

oil profits which are now 50-50 between the governments and the oil companies.

Many Oils Secure

Hooper says it seems doubtful wisdom to sell international oil at this time on the development.

Standard Oil (N.J.) and Socony Mobil each have an interest of 11 1/2 per cent in the Iraqi oil.

Three others hold interests of 23.75 per cent each—British Petroleum, Royal Dutch and Compagnie Francaise.

In Saudi Arabia, Jersey Standard, Standard of California and Texas Co. each has 30 per cent of the oil and Socony Mobil 10 per cent.

Gulf Oil has 50 per cent of Kuwait Oil and British Petroleum the other 50 per cent.

In Iran British Petroleum has 40 per cent; Royal Dutch 14 per cent and Compagnie Francaise 6 per cent.

In Qatar, British Petroleum, Royal Dutch, and Compagnie Francaise each has 23.75 per cent and Jersey Standard and Socony Mobil each 11 1/2 per cent.

Getty Oil and American Independent each has 50 per

cent of oil in the neutral zone. American Independent is owned by several companies, including Phillips, Ashland and Crescent.

Jersey Standard brings out 76,472 barrels a day from Iraq and that's only 3.4 per cent of its daily output of 2,236,000 barrels and hence of little real consequence.

Alaska Plebiscite Scheduled Aug. 26

Juneau, Alaska—(UPI)—Alaskans will hold their plebiscite on statehood Aug. 26, Territorial Gov. Mike Stepovich has announced.

Alaska also will hold its first primary election that day with the general election being held Nov. 25, Stepovich said.

The governor predicted the people of Alaska will approve the statehood bill by a 10-1 margin.

It is expected that it will take until December for Alaska actually to be admitted to the union.

The Suez Canal is a little more than 100 miles in length, about twice as long as the Panama Canal.



SPREADING REVOLT—Reports received in Istanbul indicate that the revolt which has overthrown the government of Iraq is spreading westward into Jordan. Grave fear is felt for the safety of pro-Western King Feisal of Iraq and his cousin, King Hussein of Jordan.

Pilot Part of Team To Make Rocket Possible

Editor's note: This is the fourth of five articles dealing with plans by the United States to be the first to send a man into outer space. In the preceding articles Martin Caidin said that haste is essential if the United States hopes to beat Russia. The first man to make the trip will be found in the ranks of test pilots and will undergo a physically demanding training schedule, Caidin wrote.

By MARTIN CAIDIN
(Written for United Press International. Copyright 1958 by UPI)

Capt. James T. Randall, USAF, our composite of the man who will make America's first manned flight into space, is more than an engineering test pilot.

He is a qualified aeronautical engineer and is assigned as the X-15 Project Officer. Thus from the early days of its inception, Randall has been a part of the closely-knit engineering and flight team that made the rocket-powered X-15 possible.

The giant research machine has actually been more than 10 years in design and construction. The outgrowth of design philosophies of the Air Force, Navy, NACA, National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, and the North American Co., it was created specifically to solve problems of hypersonic flight, which is five times and greater the speed of sound. The X-15 was designed to fly in regions where friction with the atmosphere is so severe that the airplane at top speed will glow a rich red from heat. Strange shock waves batter at the machine, hammering in steel-like blows at wings and controls. And in the fleeting moments so high above the earth, regular controls are useless. Pilots use reaction controls—jet nozzles—to maneuver.

Easily Modified

Because it was designed to fly under space conditions, the X-15 was easily modified for Randall's flight. Long before Randall saw the completed X-15, he knew every inch of its cabin. He "flew" for hundreds of hours in an authentic reproduction of the cabin. While engineers fed varying flight conditions to him via his instruments, he was required to wrest the X-15 from dangerous moments in his "space flights". The net result was that with his eyes closed, he knew every single control and knob, and could fly the X-15 without visual reference to his controls.

He watched special ejection seat tests with an X-15 nose section on the rocket sled track at Edwards Air Force Base, California. Speeding down the track at more than 1,400 MPH, dummies of Randall's exact size and weight were blasted free of the nose section. These tests validated the design and flight stability of the special X-15 ejection seat, for bailing out at even 900 MPH in a normal seat would tear Randall to pieces. Randall, as he awaits the signal for takeoff into space, isn't thinking much about serious trouble in orbit, or at hypersonic speeds. If something goes wrong then—the flight will simply be marked a failure. No one bails out of anything at thousands of miles per hour. There wouldn't be enough left to pick up the pieces with a blotter.

Has Tiny Wings

The X-15 has tiny wings. Most of its 60-foot length are fuel tanks to hold the fuel and liquid-oxygen which provide the tremendous power to reach orbiting velocity. The 60,000-pound thrust rocket gives little indication of its fantastic power. At 18,000 MPH it will generate nearly three million horsepower. That's the same as fifteen thousand Cadillacs each with a 200-horsepower engine, traveling at top speed!

For his first exploratory flights Randall flew the X-15 through bomber drops. A B-52 jet bomber, with the X-15 slung beneath the fuselage and right wing, carried him to 40,000 feet. The rocket plane was dropped free, and Randall eased forward the throttle. In these test flights he reached speeds of 3,900 MPH and hurtled to more than 100 miles above the earth. As amazing as this speed is, it is but a fraction of what he will need to orbit and, while he reached a great height, he remained there only for brief minutes before plummeting back to dense air.

Tests Completed

Finally all the tests were completed. The X-15 was ready, and Jim Randall had wrapped up all his flight tests. The rocket plane was flown within a giant C-133A turbo-

prop transport to Cape Canaveral, Florida. From the landing strip it was trucked to the Navaho launching site. There, a fabulous launching system rears into the sky. A control blockhouse sunk two stories above, straddles a million-pound, massive steel launcher. Beneath the cradle is a great flame pit, a curving blast tube to bend the roaring fire from the X-15's Navaho booster.

The booster is an enormous rocket nearly 90 feet long, thick and massive. It is filled with JP-4 fuel and liquid-oxygen, and from its tail juts the barrels of three mighty rocket motors. Each is more than twice as powerful as the X-15's single XLR 99 powerplant. When the command to fire is given, more than 400,000 pounds of shrieking rocket thrust will start Jim Randall on his wild ride into space. It is difficult to conceive of the truly fantastic energy that Randall will command. More than one engineer has described the flight as a "man on a volcano."

Alone in Space

Jim Randall will be alone in space when—and if—he orbits successfully. But he will never be, he knows, really out of touch. Thousands of men at Cape Canaveral and all through the 5,000-mile Missile Test Range, at control

Central Oregon Potato Producers Get Lower Rates

Portland—(UPI)—Central Oregon potato producers will receive a substantial railroad freight rate reduction next month on potato shipments to California points, Harold Turner of the Oregon Railroad Association has announced.

Turner said he received word that the central Oregon potato producers' request for reduced rates are being published by the Pacific South Coast Freight Bureau, San Francisco, to be effective Aug. 20.

Saves Large Sums

"The new rates," Turner said, "will restore former rate relationships which were distributed when rate reductions were granted in other producing areas and will save Central Oregon producers large sums of money when they market their new crop."

By way of illustration, the following rate comparisons were quoted:

To Los Angeles from Madras, Metolius, Redmond—Old rate 85 cents on 40,000 pounds minimum and 94 cents on 36,000 pounds minimum; New rate 66 cents on 40,000 pounds minimum and 61 cents on 36,000 pounds minimum. To San Francisco—Old rate 57 cents on 36,000 pounds minimum; New rate 51 cents on 40,000 pounds minimum and 46 cents on 36,000 pounds minimum.

Similar reductions have been made for all Central Oregon shipping points, including Bend, Prineville and other stations.

Texas produces 90 per cent of the United States mohair supply.

One of Six Umatilla Jail Escapees Captured

Pendleton—(UPI)—One of six prisoners who escaped from the Umatilla county jail Monday night was recaptured at a railroad station here Tuesday night, police reported at large.

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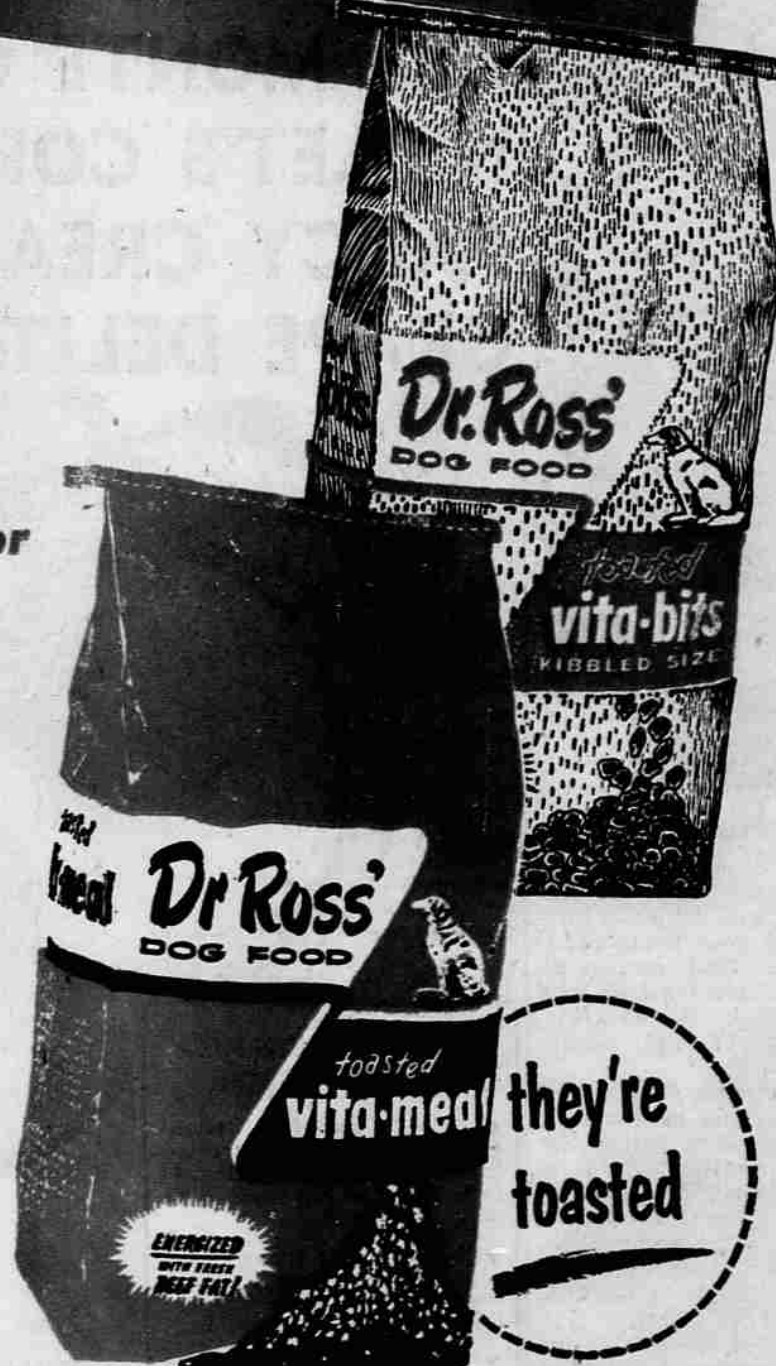
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