

Possibility of Radioactive Wastes in Sea Said Harmless

By RALPH SEGMAN
Science Service Staff Writer
Washington - The possibility that radioactive wastes, dumped in coastal waters, might harm human beings or fish is almost non-existent, according to an Atomic Energy commission biologist.

He said scientific evidence gathered by the AEC supports the contention that it is "practically ridiculous" to expect genetic damage to result from radiations emitted by materials in the steel and concrete disposal drums.

Last week at a Joint Congressional committee on Atomic Energy hearing, the question of harmful biological effects arose and set off a brief display of polemics. Sen. John O. Pastore (D-R.I.) demanded to know if the radioactivity contained in one drum is dangerous.

Negative Response
The question brought a negative response from Dr. Joseph A. Lieberman, AEC's chief of environmental and sanitary engineering, who qualified his answer with the information that he had not done the biological studies involved and therefore was not qualified to give the committee scientific backing for his opinion.

Studies on the problem have been completed or are now in progress at laboratories of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the University of Washington, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and elsewhere, Science Service learned from Dr. I. E.

Wallen, AEC Division of Biology and Medicine.

The results, Dr. Wallen said, were negative for amounts of radioactivity equivalent to those contained in disposal drums. The first detectable genetic damage was found after fish were irradiated with 25 roentgens of hard X-rays.

Radioactivity Lessons
AEC has estimated that the drums, when first sunk, emit anywhere from one-hundredth to one roentgen an hour. The radioactivity lessens, however, gradually for some isotopes and rapidly for others, becoming less likely to produce damage.

Much of the waste consists of tritium, Dr. Wallen said, and its beta radiations are so weak they cannot penetrate human skin.

He said that an extremely important reason why he believes the danger can be minimized is in the nature of the disposed wastes. Much of it consists of iron piping, broken glass, filter paper, and discarded coveralls. Should a drum break open, he said, you could hardly expect a fish to make a meal of broken glass and coveralls.

In addition, the quantities of radioactive materials are so small that even if a fish somehow got into a waste drum it would have to stay in the confines for quite a long time before it would be exposed to the slightest probability of genetic damage, Dr. Wallen said.

A more remote probability,

he pointed out, is that highly contaminated fish would be caught by fishermen.

He feels that the only reason he even talks about genetic damage resulting from radioactive waste disposal is that one should never entirely rule out the improbable.

Dr. Wallen's opinion is based on what is known as a threshold value for genetic damage. This is the theory that no damage will occur if exposure to radiation is below a certain amount. Other scientists, however, believe that any amount of radiation is capable of producing genetic mutation.

County Bank Debits Exceed \$100 Million

Banks in Jackson, Josephine and Curry county area reported June debits totaling \$100,550,794, or 36 per cent above the same month last year.

The bureau of business research in Eugene, which collects bank debit figures monthly, reported that the 185 Oregon banks had a June total of \$1,967,062,369. The total was 16.2 per cent above June, 1958, and 3.5 per cent above May of this year.

The debits, which are regarded as good indicators of current business activity, represent the dollar value of checks drawn against deposit accounts of individuals and business firms.

Two Lumber Firms Combine in Ashland

Ashland - Articles of incorporation have been filed in Salem for the Rogue-Oregon Lumber company of Ashland. They will combine the Walt Bosshard Lumber company and Burke and Pace Lumber Sales.

Bosshard, corporation secretary, and Clyde E. Dickerson have been partners in the Bosshard firm. Bobby D. Burke is the new partner. The incorporation adds a trucking division to the wholesale company of Bosshard Lumber, a spokesman explained.

All three partners have been in business in Ashland the past eight years.

Minor Earthquake Felt in Portland

Portland - (UPI) - A minor earthquake jarred Portland just before 4 p.m. Tuesday but no damage or injuries were reported. Many residents reported the tremor shook their homes and desks slid, pictures and wall clocks moved and dishes rattled.

Telephone switchboards at police, newspaper and radio station offices were jammed with calls. One woman said "it felt like the house was going to move off the foundation."

At the University of Washington in Seattle, seismologists said the earthquake was noted here at 3:53 p.m. but it was so slight no reading could be made. It was centered about 135 miles from Seattle and was a small local shock, they said.

Oregon State college seismologist H. R. Vinyard reported the shock was recorded on instruments in Corvallis at 3:53 p.m. also. He said it was a slight shock.

Two Smokejumpers Killed in Crash

Lewiston, Idaho - (UPI) - Two forest service smoke jumpers were killed yesterday when a forest service plane crashed in northern Idaho. Three other men, including the pilot, were severely burned in the crash.

The dead have been identified as Gary Williams, 23, of West Valley, N. Y., and John A. Rolf, 25, of Buchanan, N.Y. The plane crashed while trying to land near the Moose Creek ranger station. The pilot said a gust of wind blew the craft into the trees.

Maryhill School Destroyed by Fire

Maryhill, Wash. - (UPI) - A schoolhouse and other structures were destroyed by fire here Tuesday that apparently started in a packing shed. No one was reported hurt.

The flames spread to the schoolhouse and two cabins. Maryhill is a Columbia river town across from Biggs, Ore. Fire equipment was summoned from Dallesport, Goldendale and Centerville to help the Maryhill Fire District contain the flames. Strong winds fanned the blaze. The Maryhill school was 67 years old.

Ontario counted about 18 million tourists in one year.

Astronomical Show Set During Month of August

By ANN EWING
Science Service Astronomy Writer

Washington - August brings a good astronomical show, including the Perseid meteor shower.

During the first part of August, and particularly on or about the twelfth, you may see one of these shooting "stars" flash across the sky as often as 50 times in an hour. The moving light trail is caused by a piece of cosmic debris not larger than a pinhead that slams into the earth's atmosphere. Some 50 to 60 miles above the surface, the meteor begins to glow as it burns up from friction.

The Perseid meteor shower is one of the most reliable of the some 11 similar showers that appear at different times throughout the year. It is so called because the meteors seem to radiate from the constellation of Perseus, a constellation low in the northeast sky.

Do Not Radiate
Actually, the meteors do not radiate from a point, but only appear to because of perspective. They are really moving through space in parallel paths, and these seem to converge in the distance, like the parallel tracks of a railroad.

Among the other sky wonders visible in August are the two bright planets, Jupiter and Saturn. Jupiter, in the southwest in the constellation of Libra, the scales, is the most brilliant heavenly object to be seen after Venus has set in the west shortly after sunset.

Saturn, farther to the left, is in the constellation of Sagittarius, the archer. Besides these two bright evening planets, there are five bright stars visible. These are the reddish-hued Antares, also in the southwest, in the constellation of Scorpius, the scorpion; Vega, high overhead in Lyra, the lyre; Arcturus, in the west; Deneb, nearly overhead and a little to the north; and Altair, high in the southeast.

Jacoby and his teammates, Victor Mitchell, Morton Ribnow, William Grieve, all of New York, and Ira Rubin, Los Angeles, roared back from a four-point deficit at the 35th deal.

Jacoby Team Wins Ninth Match Today

CHICAGO - (UPI) - The Oswald Jacoby team won their ninth straight match early today to take the national masters team of four championship of the American Contract Bridge League's 31st annual summer tournament.

The Jacoby team, in a dramatic finish, defeated a team led by Richard Freeman, by two international match points.

The victory in the masters event gave the new titleholders the right to represent the United States in the World Bridge Olympiad in Rome in 1960.

Jacoby and his teammates, Victor Mitchell, Morton Ribnow, William Grieve, all of New York, and Ira Rubin, Los Angeles, roared back from a four-point deficit at the 35th deal.

There are about one billion working people in the world today, according to estimates of the U.N.

Teen-Ager Killed In Portland Crash

Portland - (UPI) - One person was fatally injured and six others hospitalized yesterday afternoon in a one-vehicle accident in southeast Portland.

Dead on arrival at Providence hospital was Nancy Ford, 18, Portland.

Six other teen-agers, all from Portland, suffered undetermined injuries. They are James Lind, 16, Kathleen Anderson, 14, Arlene Smith, 15, Mike Beerbower, 15, Gerald Morris, 16, and Richard Cheney, 18.

Police said the vehicle crashed into a pole.

Man Bound Over to Grand Jury Tuesday

Carrol Gene Zachary, 24, of 819 Taylor st., was bound over to the grand jury by district court Tuesday afternoon following a preliminary hearing on a charge of assault with a dangerous weapon.

He was arrested by Sheriff's officers Sunday at Jacksonville for allegedly threatening Special Deputy Lonnie L. Varner with a pistol. Zachary was lodged in county jail on \$1,500 bail.



WEARING A BROAD BRIMMED skimmer, Sir Winston Churchill, front left, and Aristotle Onassis motor through the Greek countryside, accompanied by Mrs. Tina Onassis, rear left, and Sir Winston's daughter, Mrs. Duncan Sandy's. They're bound for New Delphi to visit ruins.

Three Cars Crash Due to Deer in Road

A deer on Highway 99 just south of Talent last night caused a three-car accident that caused considerable damage to two cars and minor injuries to three people, according to the state police.

Police said that Edwin E. Christensen, 16, of 178 Winema Way, Medford, was driving north on Highway 99 and in swerving to avoid a deer crossed over to the southbound side of the road.

A passenger in his car, Dale A. Barnard, 15, of 1375 Orchard Home lane, Medford, suffered a cut on his forehead, police said, and drivers of the other two cars involved suffered minor injuries.

Mary Jane Hamilton, 20, of 824 Beal lane, Medford, had cuts and bruises and E. Jane

Anderson, 220 Fourth st., Ashland, complained of a hurt neck, police said.

The Christensen and Hamilton cars had to be towed away.

Grange News

Central Point

John Caster will be in charge of the lecturer's program for the regular grange meeting of Central Point grange on Friday, Aug. 7.

Caster is one of the young grangers and a F.F.A. boy, also active in the 4-H club program. Mrs. Edwin Gehard is in charge of the display table and will have an exhibit of old lace and embroidery.

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CALLING special meeting, President Eisenhower tells newsmen he and Soviet Premier Khrushchev will exchange visits this fall.

Oregon Projects Recommended

Washington - (UPI) - The Senate Interior committee yesterday sent to the upper chamber with recommendations for passage bills authorizing two Oregon reclamation projects.

On motion of Sen. Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore.) the committee unanimously approved construction of Bully Creek dam and reservoir in Malheur county.

It also approved a bill which provides for modification of the Crooked River project near Prineville. The latter measure will permit eventual irrigation of an additional 2,000 acres.

The Bully Creek dam proposal already has passed the House and Neuberger said Senate action is indicated. It will provide supplemental water for about 3,000 acres in the Vale irrigation project and improve flood control facilities in the Malheur river drainage.

An enlarged canal and pumping facilities are provided under the bill modifying the Crooked River project authorization. This action is necessary, Neuberger said, because the bureau of reclamation is expected to call soon for construction bids and the change will make possible savings of about \$200,000 on the project.

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