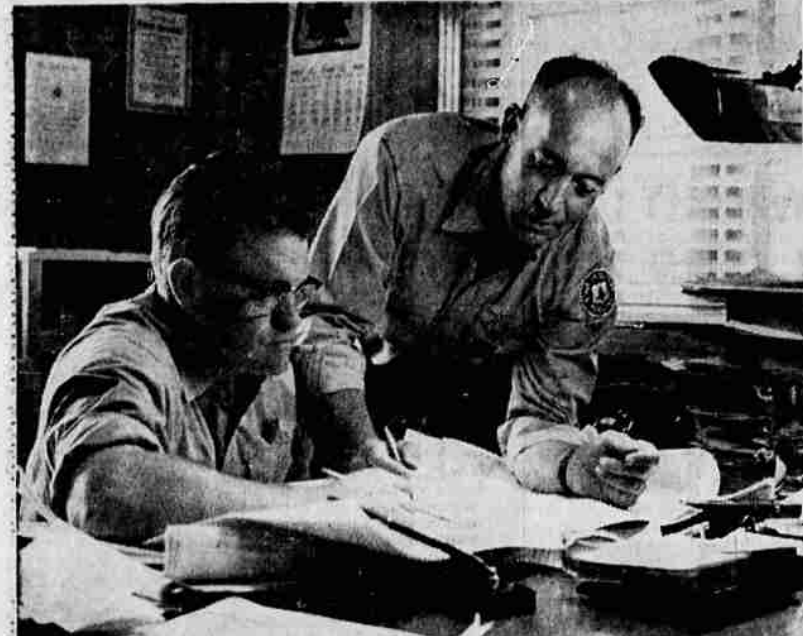


# Hypothetical Situation Could Be Real



**CHECK PLANS**—Going over the plans for a new structure to be built by the Oregon state forestry department, above, are Southwest District Warden Curt Nesheim, left, and his assistant, Doyle Stockton, both of whom work out of the Medford headquarters on Table Rock rd. Nesheim, who has more than

## Fire Suppression Becomes Science In Recent Years

**BY BOB VROMAN**  
Mail Tribune Staff writer  
The day was another scorcher... hot and dry. The asphalt on downtown streets blistered under the July sun.  
On a remote logging road to the east, a motorist, without thinking, flipped a cigarette butt out the car window, and the scene was set for a drama that happens many times a year in southern Oregon. The players: the fire suppression personnel of the Oregon state forestry department.  
This particular cigarette butt is like the fuse of a bomb. It lands in the soft, punky material of a rotten log and smoulders there for several minutes before a breeze fans the glowing tinder to life and the nucleus of a forest fire is born.

### Sees Bluish Cast

Several miles away, a lookout notices a bluish cast to the canyon haze. He notes the azimuth, the estimated distance to the area, in addition to a description of the location and the type of terrain. He writes this basic information down quickly on a special form and immediately contacts headquarters station on Table Rock rd. by radio. "This is six thirty-nine to two."  
"Two... go ahead six three nine..."  
"Ten thirty three. Blue haze noted in canyon north of Flounce rock. No column evident. Azimuth 243 degrees."

### Wheels Begin to Turn

The wheels at headquarters begin to turn. The dispatcher asks for a triangulation from another lookout station to pinpoint the location of the suspected fire. He has already spotted it.  
From all appearances it is going blaze now, as the dispatcher draws a penciled cross on a master map in the communications room. Township 32 south, range 2 east, southwest quarter section 34.  
Within minutes, the dispatcher at headquarters has radioed the fire warden at McLeod guard station. The warden shouts to his three crew members who are out back cutting wood.  
"We've got a live one in Foster canyon..."  
The men come on the run, grabbing two canteens of water as they come by the spring house, and climb aboard the fire rig that is fully equipped and ready to go.

### Plan Best Route

On the way they plan the best route to take to reach the fire. The pickup whines up the twisting mountain road and dust pours through the cab as the men try to visualize what they will find when they get there. They will be the first on the scene, and whether or not they will be able to handle the fire by themselves is a matter of question.  
The warden calls headquarters on the vehicle's radio.  
"We'll be there in about 15 minutes. How does it look?"  
Assistant District Warden Doyle Stockton sends a reply.  
"Burnt peak says its a heavy red column now... wind strong from below. It looks bad. I'm starting a crew from here..."  
The pickup jolts to a halt at a wide place in the road, and up ahead the fire, burning hot, has spread to several acres up the side of the mountain.

### Notify Logging Outfit

The warden again contacts headquarters and his message is relayed to Stockton, who is now en route to the fire. Stockton tells the headquarters dispatcher to notify a logging outfit in the area that they'll need a Cat and 15 men; and also to prepare meals for 30 men, for it looks like it might be an all night operation.  
Once on the scene, crews, under the direction of Fire Boss Stockton, cut a fire line far up the ridge, the Cat working from one side and men with hand tools from the other. Just before daybreak the fire is contained. Filthy with grime and sweat, the men can now rest easy, but a few will remain for the mop up operation... the dirtiest job of all.

### Key Man

An important job at forestry department headquarters is that of the dispatcher, who receives hundreds of radio calls a day from guard stations, lookouts and radio-equipped vehicles. Walter (Buzz) Moran takes down information on a "10-33"... the code number for a fire. All calls in the Medford sector of the southwest district are channeled through the dispatcher. A large map on his left is used to pinpoint the location of a fire by the triangulation method.

## Board Will Seek Request Opinion

Salem - UPB - The staff of the Oregon Water Resources board plans to ask the Oregon attorney general for a formal opinion on the status of an application from Idaho Power company for an Oregon license to build Brownlee, Oxbow and Hells Canyon dams on the Snake river.  
Idaho Power has sought an Oregon license since 1947. The projects have gone ahead anyway.  
A hearing was held by the board in 1956 and 1957 but the matter was deferred for several reasons, among them a study of the Snake river basin conducted by the board.

## Girl Pulls Brothers From Burning Home

Portland - UPB - An eight-year-old Portland girl pulled two younger brothers to safety from a fire which damaged their home here Friday night.  
The girl, Virginia Erhardt, rescued her younger brothers, Kenneth, 2, and Michael, 3, from their bedroom.  
Another brother, Richard, 10, was in the home and made it to safety.

## SEE X-15 AS SPY CRAFT

Tokyo - UPB - Communist China said today the U.S. experimental X-15 rocket planes "evidently are to replace" the U2 reconnaissance planes on spy missions. The Red New China news agency said the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space administration, which it described as "an organization used as a screen for air espionage," is conducting tests on a new "super high-altitude rocket plane, the X-15."  
for the man and a shovel. Portable radio networks have played an important part in bringing about fast control of forest fires, and the use of chemicals dropped from the air also are effective under certain conditions.  
The Oregon state forestry department's southwest district includes Jackson and Josephine counties. The district is divided into two parts, the Medford sector and the Grants Pass sector, with district headquarters located on Table Rock rd., Medford. Curtis Nesheim is district warden, and his assistant here is Stockton. The assistant ranger in Grants Pass is Howard Brock.

## Number of Acres

There are approximately 1,600,000 acres of state, BLM and privately-owned land in the southwest district that the state forestry department must protect from the ravages of fire. There are 16 lookout stations in the district, 11 in the Medford sector and 5 in Grants Pass. Guard stations are located throughout the district, manned by two and three-man crews that are on call day or night for the purpose of fire suppression.  
In addition, three full-time fire crews, consisting of a warden and three men, are on duty at headquarters station during fire season. A year-round cook, Mrs. C. O. Gerhardt is also employed at headquarters, and she has an assistant who will come on duty July 1.  
Fire suppression, by necessity, must be a well-coordinated operation, for there is too much at stake for error anywhere along the chain of command. Every piece of equipment must be in top shape and ready to roll when the need arises.  
Although things go along at a relaxed pace when things are quiet, the threat of fire brings a scurry of activity to fire suppression personnel... for a forest fire, like a violent animal, plays the game for keeps.

## Girls State Opens In Salem Monday

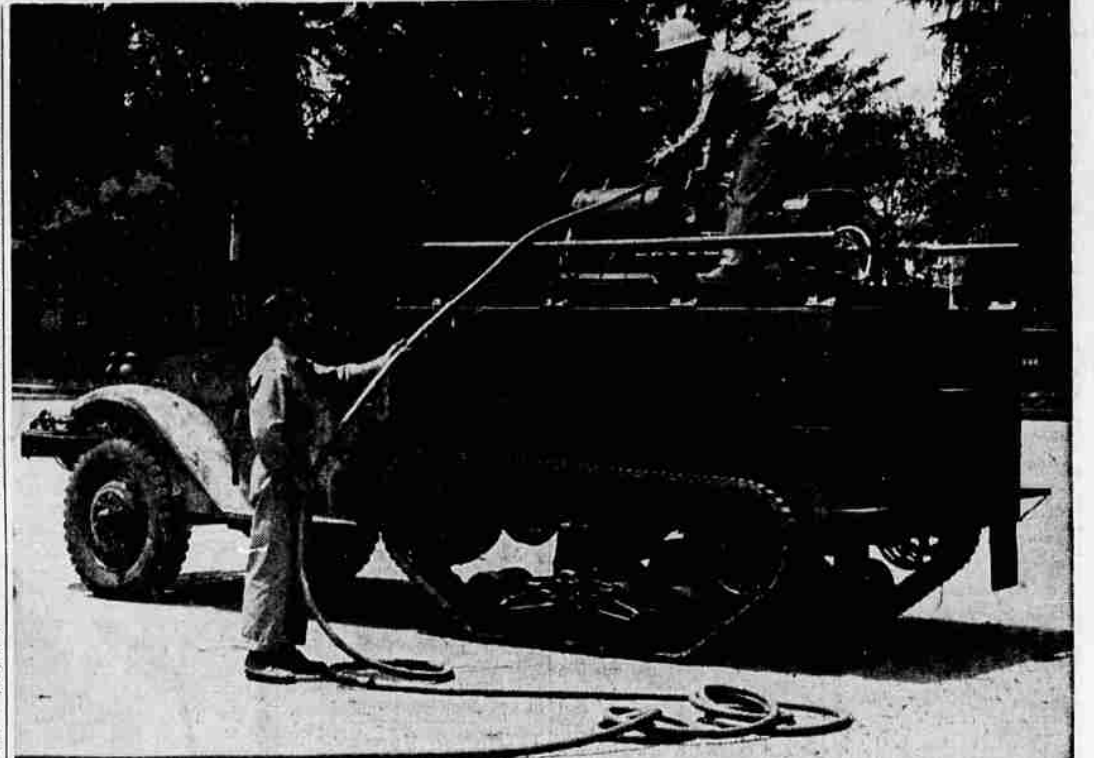
Salem - UPB - Girls State, a study in government by about 250 Oregon high school juniors, opens here Monday and lasts one week.  
A Girls State governor will be elected Thursday. Other mock state officials will be named along with mock city and county officers.  
Director of the project is Mrs. Hugh G. Murchison, Pendleton. The girls will also elect two mock U.S. Representatives and they will attend Girls Nation - the national program - in Washington, D.C.

## REDS BUILDING AIRSTRIP

Tampa, Fla. - UPB - Sen. George Smathers (D-Fla.) said Friday 252 Russian engineers and technicians are building a jet air strip in Cuba. He told a news conference it was a "definite threat to the safety of the United States."

## CALL NUMBERS

A new system that will help facilitate air-ground communications is being tried this year by the state forestry department. The radio call numbers of each vehicle are being painted on top of the cab so men in an airplane can tell the location of the man they are talking with. A reconnaissance plane can call to a driver of particular vehicle and give him directions, where before the truck might be confused with another. The four-wheel drive station wagon above belongs to Assistant District Warden Doyle Stockton.



**NEW MACHINE**—The Army surplus half-truck, above, acquired this year by the state forestry department, carries a large tank of water that will aid in forest fire mop up operations. The machine is a "bearcat" for power and traction and will go into terrain that is too rough for the tank truck. A long hose and pressure supplied by the pump on top of the tank makes it possible to wet down a wide area. The half-truck is too slow to go any distance to a fire, so it will be transported on a large carry-all pulled by a truck, according to Assistant District Warden Doyle Stockton.



**COOK**—Mrs. C. O. Gerhardt is responsible for food preparation at state forestry department headquarters, Medford, and although she regularly feeds between 12 and 15 men, she must be prepared to fix meals for 50 or 100 if a big fire broke out. The means would more than likely be in the form of sack lunches that would be delivered, along with large containers of hot coffee, to the scene of the fire. The big kitchen and dining room is located in the crew house at headquarters station. In an emergency, Mrs. Gerhardt and her summer helper, Mrs. Pearl Bean, will call for more women to help in the kitchen.



**FIRE ALARM**—Fire suppression crews at Oregon state forestry department headquarters, Table Rock rd., Medford, waste no time when a fire alert sounds over the loudspeakers. The fire rig above is fully equipped, gassed and ready to roll on a moments notice. Warden Bill Davis is shown getting into the vehicle as fire crew members George Davis (Bill's brother) and Wes Stanfield come from the warehouse on the run. Fires are often reported by motorists or residents in an area, but in the more remote sections lookouts are depended upon to turn in the alarm.

## City Manager of Eugene Resigns

Eugene - UPB - The city manager of Eugene has resigned. Robert A. Finlayson, 58, Eugene city manager since 1953, announced his resignation here Friday to Mayor Edwin E. Cone and city council members.  
Finlayson, who came here after serving as city manager at Oregon City, said he was resigning to go to another position, but did not specify what position and where.



**KEY MAN**—An important job at forestry department headquarters is that of the dispatcher, who receives hundreds of radio calls a day from guard stations, lookouts and radio-equipped vehicles. Walter (Buzz) Moran takes down information on a "10-33"... the code number for a fire. All calls in the Medford sector of the southwest district are channeled through the dispatcher. A large map on his left is used to pinpoint the location of a fire by the triangulation method.



**SPECIAL EQUIPMENT**—Forestry department warehouseman George Davis, above, removes a portable water pump from its box to be sure it's in top condition. When water is at hand, the pump could be utilized to extinguish a fire, though most of the time fires seem to start in areas away from streams. The pump is not part of the regular equipment of the department's fire trucks.



**FIRE TOOLS**—This group of hand tools being displayed by Fire Crew Warden Bill Davis are, front to back, a cruiser's axe; hazel hoe; swamping axe; pulaski and a McLeod. Davis has hand on a back pump which is carried by means of two shoulder straps. The tank, containing water, is heavy and cumbersome to carry over rough terrain, but is effectively used in combating creeping ground fires. The hand tools are used mostly in cutting fire trails, which involves removing forest duff and debris to mineral soil.

## SUBWAY SERVICE

Oslo, Norway, may be the smallest city with a subway.

**HE'S FOR REAL!**

... as Mrs. Ada Klassen, 838 Dakota, Medford, discovered June 3, 1960, when "Suds" Sutherland knocked on her door with the Folgers door-bell ringing questions. Mrs. Klassen answered correctly, and minutes later received the Westinghouse upright freezer, pictured in the background. Also upright in the background, Win Marks, manager of Radio Station K-BOY, which airs names of winners of Folgers door-bell ringing prizes daily on the

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