

**Russia Builds Turkmen Canal; World's Biggest**

By EDDY GILMORE  
AP Foreign Correspondent  
MOSCOW—Far away in distant central Asia engineers are building a 500-mile-long canal through the fiery sands and blistering suns of the Karakum desert.

You can get a fairly good idea of how huge the project is when you remember that the Suez Canal is only 193 miles long and the Panama but slightly more than 50.

The complete name of the new canal is the Main Turkmen Canal, running from Tashkhan Tash, near the sprawling foot of the Aral Sea to Krasnovodsk on the Caspian Sea. Thousands of people have been at work on it for months now, and since the Volga-Don Canal has finished, more engineers and workers have been shifted to the Turkmen.

S. Katschnuk, construction director of the huge project, re-

ported the labor tempo is being stepped up. Last year, he said, the output per worker constituted 149 per cent of the norm—this year it has reached 161 per cent.

A worker's norm—what he is expected to accomplish in a regular working day—is established beforehand. He is encouraged to better this if he can and never to fall behind it. The norm is considered 100, so if workers are now doing 161, that's quite a labor speedup.

The new canal has several objectives, all sweeping in scope and imagination:

- Taming of the treacherous waters of the Amu Darya River.
- Opening of new lands to agriculture.
- Irrigation of thousands of square miles of desert land.
- Electrification of large Asian areas.

Installation of a great transportation system whereby freight can be brought to and from these remote areas with comparative ease.

When diverted toward the Caspian, the Amu Darya, only one-fifth of whose waters are now used for irrigation purposes, will irrigate 1,300,000 hectares of the desert and the Caspian plain and will bring water to more than 7,000,000 hectares of land in this area. One hectare is 2.47 acres.

With its innumerable lateral irrigation installations, with its spreading branches, it will total more than 30,000 miles in length.

Several large hydroelectric stations, located at the various dams along the canal, will generate enough power to make it cheaper to plough by electricity in this part of Asia than by tractor.

When the canal is completed and the irrigation system is at work, the Soviet Union's annual cotton production is expected to expand to a great degree.

The Main Turkmen Canal is a center link in the USSR's big irrigation campaign.

Lavrenty Beria, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, has said that the irrigation of 20,000,000 hectares should bring about in some five years time the

increase of 8,000,000 tons in the grain crop, of 400,000 tons of rice and of 6,000,000 tons of sugar beets.

When the Soviets get the canal and the construction irrigation projects working they estimate about 1,300,000 hectares of desert will be turned into cotton country and about 7,000,000 will be good pasture.

The Karakum is one of the worst deserts in the world and has been so for a long time.

Sir Alexander Burnes, of the East India Company, who traveled this country long ago said he could imagine nothing more terrible than this wilderness.

He wrote that in 1831 and the Karakum has changed but little in the 120 years since then.

But—if all these plans turn out according to schedule—a new country, bigger than whole sections of Europe is scheduled to spring into being.

**AFL Loggers Open Meeting**

TACOMA—Delegates representing 65,000 workers in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana opened the 16th annual convention of the Northwestern Council of Lumber and Sawmill Workers (AFL) here Monday.

Approximately 300 delegates were present to hear welcoming addresses by Gov. Langbein, Mayor John Anderson and others.

Monday afternoon a schedule was given over to caucuses of the specialized trades within the council including a joint meeting of the plywood and wood workers and separate meetings of the loggers,

the sawmill employees, the box makers, and the wood preserving group.

John Gambin, of Eugene, Ore., president of the Northwestern Council, is presiding during the four-day convention, first to be held by the group in Tacoma.

**CASUALTY LIST**  
WASHINGTON—The Defense Department today identified 67 Korean War casualties in a new list (No. 649) that reported 16 killed, 46 wounded, two missing and three injured.

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**United States Requests More Yugo Cooperation**

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP)—The United States has asked Premier Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia for greater cooperation in the joint defense of Southeastern Europe, including the use by American planes of air bases in this country.

From a reliable source, it was learned that Vice Adm. J. H. Cassady, commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean-based Sixth Fleet, laid the proposition before Tito last week aboard the giant aircraft carrier Coral Sea during his visit to Split.

It was presented in the course of a special briefing, before the Coral Sea's sailors and aviators but on a demonstration of American sea and air power. Tito was shown charts outlining how and where carrier-based planes, operating from the Adriatic, could strike in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria if Yugoslavia was attacked by the Soviet satellites.

Cassady was quoted as paying a glowing tribute to Yugoslavia's resistance against Russian pressure since its break with the Soviet-led Cominform in 1948. He expressed American gratification at this country's recent measures to increase defensive cooperation with Greece and Turkey.

But he said the United States would like even greater direct cooperation with Yugoslavia—cooperation already marked by increasing shipment of American arms to equip Tito's tough, well trained troops.

Cassady reportedly offered two informal yet highly important suggestions. He said he would like to

units of the American Navy in the Adriatic.

Poker faced, Tito remained non-committal. This came as no surprise.

It was unlikely that he would make an on-the-spot decision. Presumably, the question how far Yugoslavia should go in cooperation with the Western world will arise next month at a conference of the country's ruling Communist Party at Zagreb—the first since the Cominform break nearly five years ago.

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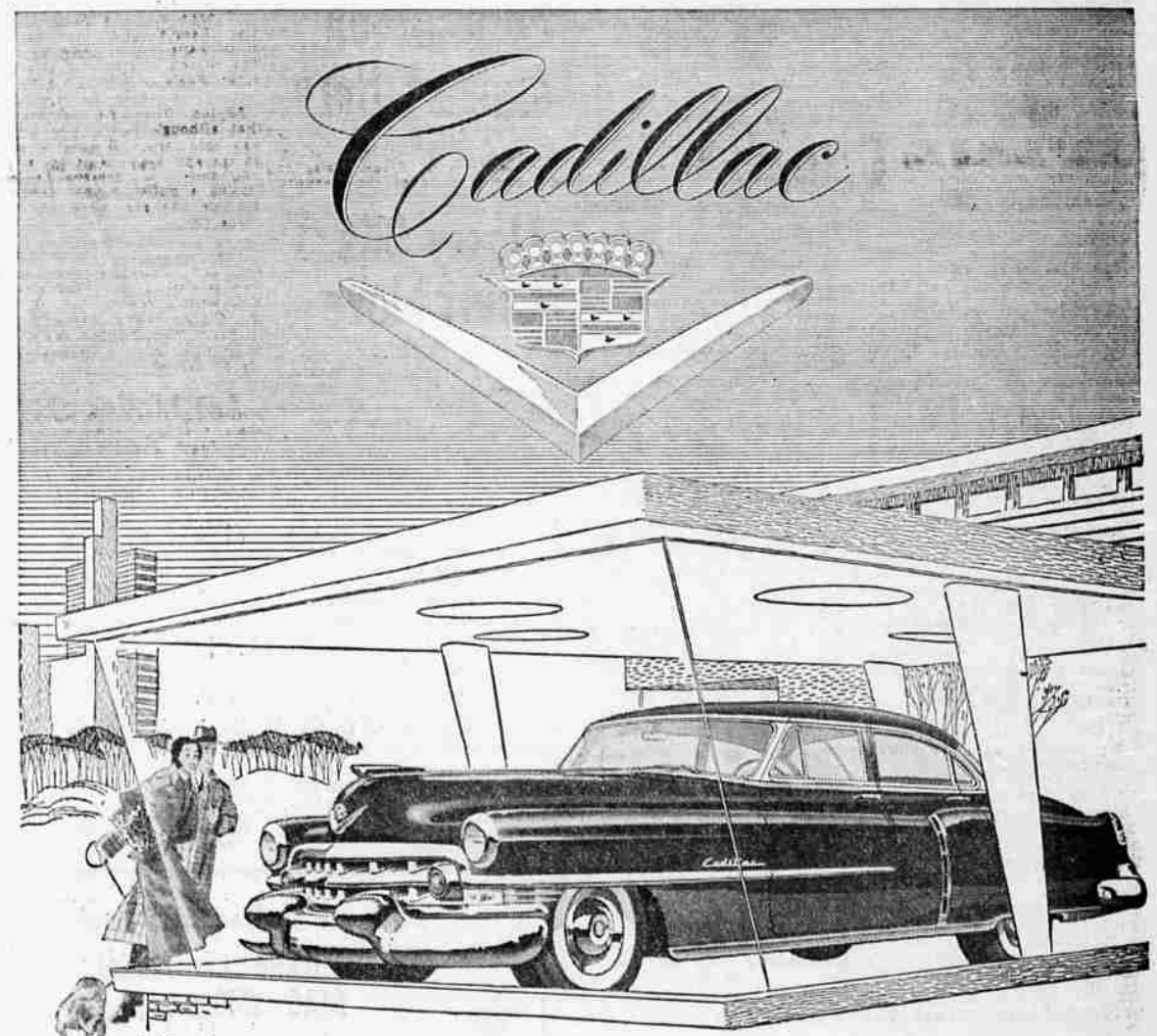


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