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ESSA ADMINISTRATOR URGES WORLD WEATHER PROGRAM

Dr. Robert M. White, ESSA Administrator, was the keynote speaker at a session of the American Meteorological Society held in conjunction with the national meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C. on December 28, 1966. He stated that creation of a World Weather Program would save many lives and enable the Nation to realize tremendous economic benefits. Panelists with Dr. White on the session, devoted exclusively to the World Weather Watch, were Dr. Walter Orr Roberts, Director, National Center for Atmospheric Research; Dr. Joseph Smagorinsky, Director of ESSA's Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory, Institute for Atmospheric Sciences; and Dr. Morris Tepper, Director, NASA Meteorological Systems. Prof. Louis J. Battan, president of the AMS, was chairman of the panel. The World Weather Watch Program, an international effort in which President Johnson had pledged the Nation's cooperation, is a long-range effort planned by the World Meteorological Organization, a specialized agency of the United Nations.

CLEAR AIR TURBULENCE REPORT RELEASED

A coordinated Federal effort to combat clear air turbulence was urged by the National Committee for Clear Air Turbulence in a report released on December 28, 1966. The findings of the Committee, headed by Maj.-Gen. Jack Catton, Director of Air Force Aerospace Programs, were contained in a report delivered to Dr. Robert M. White, Federal Coordinator and Administrator of ESSA. The report will be analyzed by Dr. White and the Federal Committee, headed by Dr. J. Herbert Hollomon, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Science and Technology, with a view to establishing a five-year Federal plan to attack the CAT problem. The Committee was formed at the request of Dr. Harold Brown, Secretary of the Air Force (then Director/Defense Research and Engineering), to Dr. Hollomon, last February. The Committee's report supported dramatically the official concern which resulted in its formation. It recommended that primary responsibility for different areas of the national program be assigned to four Federal agencies: the Department of Defense, the Department of Commerce, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Federal Aviation Agency. Overall coordination would rest with the Federal Coordinator for Meteorological Services and Supporting Research.

311 PH

RADAR RESEARCH UNIT UNDER CONSTRUCTION

A major IER radar research station is now under construction near Platteville, Colo., and is expected to be operating by 1968. The high-frequency radar unit for the site has been designed to perform a variety of experiments, including studies of ionospheric irregularities and backscatter signal characteristics, synoptic mapping of ionospheric electron densities, long-range radar surveillance, ionospheric modification, and long-delay radar echoes. The 10 transmitters to be used at the new station--supplying 1.6 million watts power to the antenna array--are being developed by the Boulder staff.

NESC IMPROVES MAPS

A new type of composite map--prepared at NESC by combining the cloud-cover analysis based on satellite pictures with the closest synoptic-time surface weather analysis--is designed to facilitate use of satellite data at field stations. In the operational program which began on Dec. 20, three charts are transmitted on the National Facsimile Network each day--one each for the North Atlantic, North America, and North Pacific.

C&GS PREPARES FIRST TAXI CHART

A prototype Airport Taxi Chart of the Chicago-O'Hare International Airport, showing details of runways, taxiways, and buildings, has been prepared by the C&GS for the Federal Aviation Agency. The chart, which may be the forerunner of a new series, will be issued to instrument approach procedure chart subscribers, published in the FAA Airman's Information Manual, and distributed by the FAA for evaluation.

STORMPROOF STATION NEARS COMPLETION

The new Atmospheric Probing Facility at Boothville, La., which replaces the structure destroyed by Hurricane Betsy in 1965, is scheduled for completion in mid-February. With its first floor 10 feet above ground level as protection against hurricane-driven tides, the reinforced concrete building will have emergency power, radio communications, mess and sleeping facilities. Initially, Boothville will continue as an upper-air and surface serving site, but provision has been made for installation of weather radar and other special probing devices in the future.

SNOW PICTURES MAY AID FLOOD WARNING

A study conducted for the Weather Bureau's Office of Hydrology shows that one inch or more of snow cover can be reliably identified from satellite pictures and that snow distribution can be mapped to an accuracy of 20 miles. In non-forested areas, snow depths of three inches or less show less reflectivity than those of greater depths. An increased capability of assessing snow accumulations, especially in remote sections where observation stations are limited, could result in faster release of river forecasts and flooding warnings. In the study performed by ARACON Geophysics, TIROS and ESSA pictures were compared to actual snow-depth data for the Missouri and upper Mississippi river drainage area.

YAQUINA RIVER TO GET TIDE STATION

A new control tide station will be installed at the Marine Science Center of Oregon State University at the mouth of the Yaquina River near Newport, Oregon. Installation will be supervised by Lieutenant Henry L. Pittock III, USESSA, who is currently doing graduate work in oceanography on the university's main campus at Corvallis. The station will provide valuable tidal data for an area now served only by the widely separated gages at Astoria, Oregon, and Crescent City, California.

BATON ROUGE BUYS WEATHER RADIO

Baton Rouge, La., has funded its own emergency weather warning radio system which is scheduled to go into operation before the end of the year. Public spirited citizens, industrial leaders, and the city's news media banded together and purchased a VHF/FM transmitter which will be located at the Weather Bureau Airport Station. Bureau personnel will operate the station. Radio and television stations within the transmitter's 40-mile range can use the transmissions directly or for later rebroadcast.

APT USE FOR CHINESE JUNK

The British magazine, "Weather," reports that Hong Kong's Royal Observatory has built an Automatic Picture Transmission receiving station from such parts as an old TV set and a 40-gallon oil drum weighted with bricks and rubble. According to the magazine story, the ESSA 2 and Nimbus pictures received by the homemade set are comparable to the best received anywhere.

HOLDING THE BAG

Employees of the Anchorage Space Disturbance Monitoring Station take turns carrying an old suitcase around during off-duty hours. In the suitcase is a radio receiver that sounds an alarm when damaging radiation in space is detected by sensors back at the station. If the alarm goes off, the employee must return to the station to relay information on the disturbance to the Solar Forecast Centers at Boulder and Ent Air Force Base, Colo. Most staff members prefer taking care of the suitcase to standing shifts at the station.

MIRABITO HAS A RANGE

The United States Board on Geographic Names has named an Antarctic mountain range in honor of John A. Mirabito, a retired Navy Commander who is marine services coordinator in the Office of User Affairs. The Mirabito Range, with peaks approximately 8,000 feet high, forms the major spur of the Victory Mountains in Northern Victoria Land. From 1955 to 1959, Cdr. Mirabito was senior staff meteorological officer with the Navy Task Force which provided logistic support to the U. S. scientific program conducted by the National Science Foundation during the International Geophysical Year. He planned and operated the basic network of U.S. meteorological stations in the Antarctic.

USDA SETS SPRING REGISTRATION DATES

Spring registration for the USDA Graduate School will be held from January 21 to 28 on the first floor of the Department of Agriculture Administration Building, 14th and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D. C. Registration hours will be 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays, and 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. New courses not listed in the 1966-67 catalog include Basic Mathematics, Equipment Selection, Theory and Cases, Celestial Navigation, and Air Pollution -- Electric Power Generation -- Seminar.

Items to be considered for ESSA NEWS must be received by Friday for publication the following Friday. Send material to: Office of Public Information, ESSA, Room 804, Bldg. 5, WSC, Rockville, Md. 20852. Phone (301) 496-8243

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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