

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt  
but intended for use  
July 27, 1933

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed July 20, 1933

A SCHEME TO ALTER CLIMATE

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

Most schemes for altering climate on a large scale are open to one obvious objection. They might or might not work; but the cost of their execution would certainly be prohibitive. A recently much talked-of plan for improving the climate of eastern Siberia stands upon a different footing. The proposed method of accomplishing this purpose does not contemplate excessive expense in comparison with the benefits sought. Whether these benefits would result is another question.

In the Sea of Japan a stream of cold water, the Liman Current, flows southward close to the Siberian coast, and <sup>a</sup> warm stream, the Tsushima Current, northward along the shores of Japan. The cold current comes from the Sea of Okhotsk through the strait between the island of Sakhalin and the mainland. There is a point where this strait is so narrow that, we are told, it would be no great engineering feat to close the strait by a dam. Thus no more cold water would enter the Japan Sea from this quarter.

The construction of the dam is now seriously proposed as a means of giving eastern Siberia a warmer winter climate, freeing the Siberian coast, including the harbor of Vladivostok, from its winter ice blockade, and freeing the waters off the same coast from the fog that usually prevails there in summer. In winter, however, the Siberian coast gets its cold weather from the west, and a warming of the Japan Sea might, by lowering barometric pressure there, increase the intensity of the cold winds from the interior of the continent, thus making the climate worse instead of better. There might be some reduction in the amount of ice offshore. Since the summer fogs apparently result from the blowing of warm, moist easterly winds over the cold current, they might be eliminated by its abolition. Nobody really knows just what would happen if this project were carried out. It would be interesting as a scientific experiment.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

-----  
SCIENCE SERVICE  
21st and Constitution Ave.  
Washington, D.C.