

# Defense Department to Conduct Underwater Nuclear Experiment

The Department of Defense will conduct an underwater seismic experiment this summer in the Aleutian Islands area as a part of the continuing VELA UNIFORM research program of the Advanced Research Projects Agency.

A series of underwater detonations of conventional explosives will be conducted by both the Navy's Office of Naval Research and the Air Force Technical Applications Center.

Plans for the Aleutian experiment have been made in consultation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

and the U.S. Department of the Interior. No effects of the underwater detonations will be noticeable on land areas except on special recording instruments.

Based on past experience in both oceans with detonations at sufficient depths in deep waters, no harmful effects are expected to result to fishing or other marine life, and every effort will be made to minimize interference with shipping, fishing or other marine interests.

The Aleutian experiment will consist of measurements, with ocean bottom seismo-

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# Nuclear Testing

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graphs, of approximately 40 underwater chemical detonations of five-ton conventional explosives on a profile extending approximately 1100 miles southwest and 500 miles northeast from Amchitka Island.

The tests will begin in mid-July. A 2,000-ton detonation is scheduled for early August. This larger test will be conducted at a depth of 4,000 feet in the hull of the World War II liberty ship the SS Robert L. Stevenson.

The ship will be towed to a location 32 miles off Amchitka and scuttled. The cargo consists of obsolete Navy explosives, old mines, torpedo warheads and other deteriorated ordnance, depot.

The experiment will obtain data on the thickness and the seismic velocity of the crust, upper mantle and deep structure of this particular area.

Such data, as well as previous information from both nuclear and conventional tests, can be further compared with natural earthquake signals from the area in order to determine the differences between the two.

None of the underwater tests will be conducted near land, and none will be detonated in less than 600 feet of water. This series is scheduled to be completed by mid-September.

Representatives of the Department of the Interior and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game have been invited to observe the experiment. Safety patrol will be conducted and notices to mariners will be issued by the U.S. Coast Guard.