

## INVENTION

# Current U. S. Patents

Algae, which contain many nutritionally valuable substances, can be made to taste better by bleaching with intense rays of white light—By William McCann

► A PROCESS for making healthful and tasty food from algae, the plentiful primitive plants found in water, has received a patent from the U.S. Patent Office in Washington, D.C.

In the process green algae are bleached by rays of intense white light to give them a better taste and appearance, report inventors David D. Chapman, Seattle, Gerald M. Christensen, Bellevue, Arthur J. Pilgrim, Bellevue, Joseph A. Stern, Bothell, and Irena Zommers, Seattle, Wash.

Algae, which are readily available throughout most of the world, contain many of the nutritionally valuable substances that humans need, and thereby could help solve the increasing problem of food shortage in many countries. In addition, they have shown promise as a source of oxygen and food for future space travel.

The algae-food developed by the new process "contains substantially all the basic nutritional ingredients required for human subsistence," the inventors report. In addition it may be used in therapeutic diets. The process earned patent 3,197,309 and patent rights were assigned to the Boeing Company, Seattle.

## Push-Button Barricade

A highway barricade that can quickly be inflated by police to warn motorists of any danger up ahead earned patent 3,197,628 for Richard W. Schuff, Phoenix, Ariz.

The barricade, which is illuminated so that it can be used either day or night, takes up little space in a highway patrol car and can be quickly put into operation by pushing a button.

## Smashup Cushion

A newly patented inflatable bag pops up between the driver and the dashboard to keep him safe in a smashup.

Upon impact, a special valve is tripped so that gas from a high pressure tank in the trunk inflates the bag in a fraction of a second. The bag, which pops up between the man's upper body and the dash and windshield of the car, holds the driver flush against the seat.

Harry A. Bertrand, Kalamazoo County, Mich., earned patent 3,197,234 for the fast-action safety bag.

## Auto Chopper

A portable machine that chops old cars into little pieces may help rid the nation of many of its millions of junked autos, which keep piling up along the roadsides.

The machine, which can be driven around the scrap heap like a jeep, has a movable

"arm" in front with a pair of giant shears at the end.

Joseph R. Mordan, Alden, N.Y., was awarded patent 3,196,726 for the auto chopper, which he claims will let two or three men do the same work that it would otherwise take 15 men to do with acetylene torches.

## Other Interesting Patents

A ready-to-serve salad has received a patent. Omar Dajany, Arlington, Va., earned patent 3,197,311 for the salad, which he says is resistant to wilting and decay and which can be adapted to mass production techniques.

An outer space filling station may some day be winging around the earth so that spaceships can stop and refuel before continuing their journey.

The space fuel storage and dispensing system earned patent 3,197,087 for Dolphus H. Black, Arab, Ala. The inventor claims that it is highly reliable for transferring and dispensing the fuels in a zero gravity and vacuum environment.

A runway clearing machine runs up and down a set of tracks along a runway, blowing out hot gases to melt ice and snow. The machine, which looks somewhat like a harmonica with wheels, is remotely controlled and can be readily installed in existing runways, according to inventor James J. Fayed, Silver Spring, Md., who earned patent 3,196,863.

• Science News Letter, 88:109 August 14, 1965

## TECHNOLOGY

## Tests Start Soon on Car Made to Be Thrown Away

► THE PROTOTYPE of a revolutionary throw-away car will soon be starting its trials in London.

This vehicle is nearly three feet shorter than an Austin Mini but carries five people and is planned to sell at under \$700.

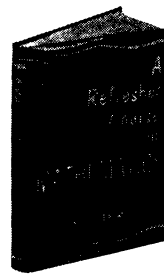
Maintenance will be almost eliminated. Worn or damaged parts will be thrown away and replaced with new. The body-chassis structure is made up of three glass-fiber moldings. The engine, under the seats, can be changed in 10 minutes.

It was conceived primarily as a city car and therefore its maximum speed of 40 miles per hour is believed adequate by its creator, John West, who worked on designing the liner Canberra. Mr. West is using an existing engine on his prototype because it is readily available, but a throw-away unit would be preferable for production.

• Science News Letter, 88:109 August 14, 1965

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