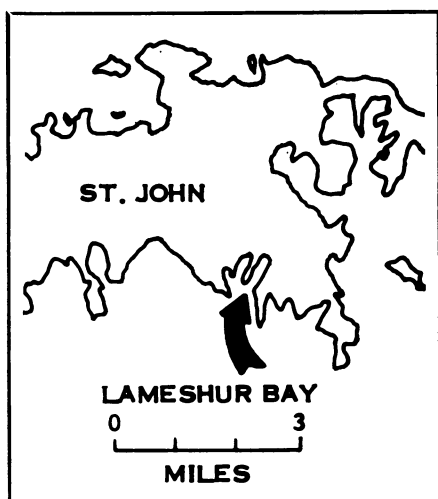


G.E.

*For two long months, a tiny home.*



G.E.

*Tektite 1 site: warm and shallow.*

cans, 18 feet high and 12 feet in diameter, connected by a tunnel and each divided into two levels. One can contains the environmental control system and storage area upstairs, and a so-called wet laboratory below with a hatch in the floor. The hatch is always open to the sea, which is kept out by the equalized air pressure. A dry lab is in the upper half of the other canister, with living quarters below.

General Electric, which built the habitat at an estimated cost of some \$750,000, says that it could be raised and transported to another spot for reuse if other organizations showed interest. The Smithsonian Institution reportedly intends to visit the Tektite 1 site with an eye toward using it in the future for such tasks as inventorying marine life around tropic reefs.

**The Navy** is particularly interested in Tektite as, among other things, an exercise in underwater construction technology. In addition, biomedical and physiological data gathered from the aquanauts are important to the Navy's Man In The Sea program, which includes Sealabs and other activities.

To the four scientist-aquanauts—Richard A. Waller, Conrad V. W. Mahnken, H. Edward Clifton and John G. Van Derwalker—who will live in Tektite, however, their own scientific researches will be the primary activity. This is opposed to the elaborate physical and psychological tests and trials of experimental equipment that are the main part of the Sealab program.

Plankton and other forms of marine flora and fauna will be studied intensively, with great care being given to preserve the natural conditions in which they live. At night, for example, the

portholes of the habitat will be covered, to prevent light from shining out and attracting abnormal amounts of plankton and fish—"as they do in Sealab," adds one of the aquanauts with evident disdain.

Despite their isolation, it is unlikely that any of the aquanauts will suffer from much boredom. Their habitat is equipped with television and AM and FM radio, but even those diversions are not deemed vital.

"At night, we can look out the window," says Aquanaut Van Derwalker. "That's better than any TV."

## FEDERAL LABORATORIES

### Keeping track of a national asset

Efficient use of Government research facilities has been a problem ever since the beginning of the era of big science and big Federal support. In the next budget year, for instance, despite both a holddown, and a March revision of his predecessor's budget by President Nixon, some \$200 million is expected to be invested in Federal research and development facilities, on top of some \$5 billion spent in the last decade alone. Despite the billions already invested in national laboratories, new research programs tend to lead to new construction instead of using available facilities.

A major barrier, says a report by the House Subcommittee on Science, Research and Development, is that few agencies needing research facilities actually know what is available elsewhere in the Government. There is no single office or official with information about the capabilities, the special proficiencies and the equipment and facilities of these national laboratories.

Some agencies do keep track: The Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration know what they have and what it can do. But their efficiency is not the rule.

The subcommittee finds it "curious that the Department of Defense with laboratories that operate at a level of \$0.9 billion and represent capital investment of about \$2.2 billion has information systems about them while the overall Federal Government with more than 100 major and countless smaller laboratories spending about \$3.5 billion annually and representing a capital investment of more than \$11.2 billion, does not."

The committee, headed by Dr. Allen V. Astin, director of the National Bureau of Standards, has a task force working on proposals for making the inventory, but such a national stock-taking remains in the discussion stage.

The subcommittee report stresses that tighter budgets mean that greater

interagency use of Federal laboratories, instead of creating new institutions, has become essential. For example, the Department of Justice, in implementing the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, could save critical time and expedite establishing the new Crime Institute by using existing Federal laboratories for required research.

## APPOINTMENTS

### Seaborg to stay on



AEC

*AEC's Seaborg will stay on the job.*

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, who has served as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission under both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, will continue in that post under the Nixon Administration. Dr. Seaborg emerged from a White House conference on Jan. 28 to say that the President had asked him to stay on and that he had accepted. His term as AEC member is due to expire June 30, 1970.

Meanwhile other Government scientific posts are hanging fire. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has been without a permanent administrator since October when Dr.