

Bold Water Planning Urged

► THE HUMAN race needs bold, imaginative thinking where its water supply is concerned. It also needs caution in investigating the consequences of how scientists are modifying our earth and weather.

More attention should be given to possible disastrous side effects of huge projects such as redistribution of water throughout North America, or the breaking up of hurricanes, Dr. Raymond L. Nace, research hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, said.

Before we congratulate ourselves on our progress in controlling water and weather, we had better take a deeper look, "lest our big thoughts turn out to be unthinkable monsters," he said before the International Water Quality Symposium in Montreal, Canada. More than 1,000 scientists and specialists attended the two-day conference, sponsored by the Water Conditioning Association International.

Dr. Nace pointed out possible drawbacks inherent in plans for increasing the water supply. He cited the proposed \$100 billion plan of North American Water and Power Alliance (NAWAPA)—"one of the biggest water thoughts yet generated." This immense project envisions a system of dams,

canals and power plants to redistribute water in seven provinces of Canada, 35 states of the United States and three states in Mexico.

Yet NAWAPA's huge reservoirs, equal in volume to that of Lake Erie, would place new load stresses on the earth's crust. Many questions can be raised, he said. For instance, what would be the effect of placing 400 miles of water along the Rocky Mountain Trench, a geological structure whose nature is unknown?

What will happen when large volumes of unfrozen water are placed over northern areas that have been permanently frozen? And what will happen to the climate when this water is brought to more southerly latitudes and evaporation is increased?

The experiments under way to deflect or break up hurricanes are other projects that need questioning, Dr. Nace said. Minimizing wind, wave and flood damage from hurricanes in the southeastern United States sounds fine—but what about the beneficial rains these storms bring to the northeastern states, now so deep in drought? Dissipation of the hurricane's fury may avert disaster in one area, but only compound disaster in another.

Improved Fruit Storage May Affect Farm Prices

► FRESH peaches and nectarines keep better in certain "controlled atmospheres" than they do in air, scientists at the 17th International Horticultural Congress, College Park, Md., were told.

Peaches ripened with a good yellow color and had less flesh breakdown when they were stored in a special atmosphere containing only 0.25%, 1% or 3% oxygen and 5% carbon dioxide than when stored in air, which is 21% oxygen.

By lowering the level of oxygen and increasing the percent of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and slowing the ripening process of fruit, farmers could hold on to some of their crops instead of marketing the bulk of what they have grown at harvest time when prices are lowest.

Dr. Raymond E. Anderson of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service, Washington, D.C., reported that after ripening, fruit held in a controlled environment had better flavor and a higher acidity, giving peaches and nectarines the tartness many consumers like.

Storage conditions were studied for two years by Dr. Anderson, horticulturalist Chester S. Parsons and pathologist Dr. Wilson L. Smith Jr.

Process Gives More Rice

► WHITER rice, and more of it, as well as protein-rich rice bran and inexpensive rice oil can be produced by a new milling process.

Improved nutritional benefits are seen for the nearly one-quarter of the world's population dependent on rice as a principal source of food.

Called Solvent Extraction Milling Process (SEM), the new method marks the first departure from traditional abrasion and pressure milling techniques in 5,000 years.

Whole grain rice crops, with less fat content and longer shelf life, can be increased up to 10%.

Rice bran, commonly dark, bitter and used almost exclusively as animal feed, turns out to be creamy white, stable, clean and 50% higher in protein value with the new milling process. Now

much more suitable for human consumption, it has potential uses in baby foods, hot cereals, baked goods, beverages, cosmetics and even pharmaceuticals.

Rice oil, used in salad and cooking oils, margarine, carnauba-type waxes, cosmetics and speciality paints, was previously extracted from rice bran by a separate process. However, using SEM, approximately two and a half pounds of rice oil are produced just in the ordinary milling process from every barrel of rice milled. This means a substantial additional financial gain of about 20 to 40 cents return on every barrel of rice.

The new milling process, invented by Mr. Truman B. Wayne of Houston, Texas, was developed by Riviana Foods Inc., also of Houston.

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