

Illegal visits to 'hot' islands

Illegal landings, probably by fishermen, are being made on the still radioactive Monte Bello islands, scene of British atomic blasts in 1953 and 1956. An Australian survey team from the Fremantle-based frigate Diamantina found evidence of the visits when it carried out radiation tests on several of the islands.

On Tremouille Island, scene of the 1956 tower blast, the party found a four-wheel drive vehicle in running order and breaks in the barbed-wire fence separating the clean and contaminated areas. Wheel tracks indicated that the fence had been cut to allow the vehicle to travel from one end of the island to the other. Other tracks to the beach, and several dead campfires, suggested that the island had been used by fishermen, probably for netting.

The illegal visits have been made despite many warning signs surrounding the radioactive danger areas. The latest survey is the second since the initial radiation survey following the tests. It disclosed that radiation is still present but diminishing. Ground zero on Tremouille and Alpha Islands—explosion sites for the two 1956 blasts—are still hot. Just how severe and varied the radiation is will not be known until 69 soil and rock samples collected by the survey team are analyzed. Whether the islands will be thrown open for oil exploration will depend on its findings.

Teacher drain to Canada

Hundreds of primary and secondary school teachers will leave Australia shortly to take teaching posts in Canada. At least 100 Australian teachers will accept jobs in Toronto alone.

N. A. Sweetman, superintendent of public schools for the Toronto Board of Education, has interviewed more than 200 Australian applicants for teaching posts in Toronto.

Sweetman has recruited teachers in Auckland, Melbourne and Sydney. The Canadians are offering Australian teachers salaries ranging, in Australian dollars, \$3,780 to \$6,500 depending on experience. (An Australian dollar is worth \$1.12 U.S.)

This compares with a salary range in Australia of \$2,687 to \$5,342. The Australian teachers who go to Canada are not given their fares but each receives a relocation allowance of \$1,232 on arrival.

There are already many Australian teachers in British Columbia. Last year 250 Australian teachers arrived in Vancouver on one boat. *W. A. Scholes*

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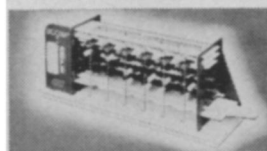
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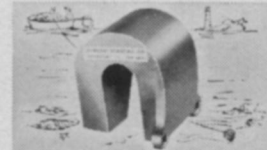
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