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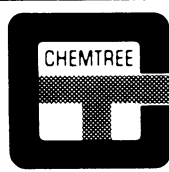
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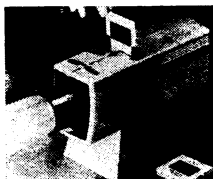
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rides about 25 or 30 feet off the ocean floor. The sled carries magnetometers and sonars, to identify metallic objects, and cameras to photograph whatever is found.

The supposed Scorpion fragments were found and photographed in about 10,000 feet of water, well below the depth at which pressure would have crushed the submarine.

The initial photographs from Mizar have been flown to the United States. Navy spokesmen say they will be analyzed to determine exactly what they do show and then turned over to the official board investigating the cause of the disaster; the board has been reconvened at Norfolk in light of the findings. After the board has examined the pictures for evidence, security considerations

will determine whether they will be released to the public.

Security reasons also preclude publication of the exact location of the wreck, at least while there is still something to be found there.

**The next step** in the Scorpion search will be to send down a deep diving submersible, probably the Trieste, in an effort to bring up some of the fragments. The Navy has under development free deep submersibles that can cruise at great depths to perform search and rescue missions, but they have been having budget trouble. The general technique is therefore still what it has been for many years past: trawling with instruments and then dropping a deep diving capsule to fetch up what is found

**OVERDONE**

**Diet drugs accused in court test**

Vera Ashley, a 36-year-old Maryland housewife, drove her daughter to school on May 25, 1964. On the way home she suddenly slumped over the wheel of the car and died. Her death has been blamed, in court, on diet pills.

Mrs. Ashley's doctors, Charles J. Savarese and Wilfred H. Ehrmantraut, are charged with malpractice—giving her overstrong doses of an obesity drug that has since been taken off the market. The trial, which may last as long as four weeks, is believed to be the first civil suit involving the controversial pills. Mrs. Ashley's estate is suing for \$1.5 million in damages on behalf of her two surviving children.

Mrs. Ashley, who was five feet four inches tall and once weighed 202 pounds, reportedly wanted to lose weight to win back her estranged husband. Her doctors prescribed Neo-Barine, a potent drug containing a thyroid hormone called thyroxin.

**Excessive doses**, her estate's lawyers claim, caused a condition known as thyrotoxicosis which led to heart failure.

Attorneys, and some medical witnesses, for Drs. Savarese and Ehrmantraut dispute the cause of death, laying it to a virus.

Regardless of the outcome of this case, researchers present strong evidence condemning weight-losing pills laden with thyroid hormones and other potent agents including digitalis, a heart drug, diuretics for loss of fluids, and laxatives.

In the United States some 5,000 doctors engaged exclusively in treating the obese, prescribing, and often selling, at least \$60 million worth of brightly colored pills a year.

The consensus of the medical profession, voiced by the American Medical Association, is that pills won't work,

and may kill you. At least 60 deaths have been attributed to diet pills, though the figure may be staggeringly higher.

**As a result**, this year, Senator Philip Hart (D-Mich.), introduced a bill forbidding physicians to sell what they prescribe. It died in this session of Congress but will be reintroduced next year.

Thyroid hormones supposedly cause weight loss by speeding the body's metabolism, so that food is burned up rapidly. But, says Dr. Harry C. Shirkey of Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., they often simply increase appetite, inducing an even greater food intake than before. The hormones, in effect, stoke a furnace for which the body is the fuel, and dangerously stimulate the heart.

**Digitalis**, another diet drug, is designed for heart patients. One of the early effects of toxic doses is loss of appetite. A later effect is death. Though used in small doses in diet pills (30 milligrams of digitalis leaf), it is notorious for its tendency to accumulate in the body—a likely probability for fat patients who take pills indiscriminately.

Diuretics, physicians argue, should be given only to persons with kidney disease or other diseases associated with high fluid retention. Fat patients, they say, seldom just have too much water in their bodies. Likewise, there is no rational basis for use of laxatives in diet pills. "Obviously," Dr. Shirkey says, "it is not difficult to administer enough laxative to hasten the passage of ingested foods through the gastrointestinal canal so that most of it is not absorbed." But, he points out, vitamins and essential body chemicals are lost as well as weight. The result: a thinner person with metabolic disturbances.