



ATOMIC POWER PILE—Diagram shows the principles of the pile, marking man's first effort to harness the atom for peacetime purposes. Construction by the Monsanto Chemical Co. probably will get under way sometime in 1947.

OCEANOGRAPHY

Sea Wave Warning Service

Principal headquarters will be in Honolulu to warn coast dwellers of approaching sea waves like the one that drowned Hawaiians last April.

➤ A WARNING service, to save lives and minimize property damage from earthquake-caused sea waves, is now being planned by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. It will have its principal headquarters in Honolulu, with additional seismological observatories at Sitka and College, Alaska, and at Tucson, Ariz.

Great sea waves, like the one that drowned 140 people in Hawaii last April, are caused by certain kinds of submarine earthquakes. (See SNL, Nov. 16, 1946.) The exact mechanism of their inception, however, is not yet understood, states Comdr. Elliott B. Roberts, chief of the Division of Geomagnetism and Seismology of the Survey, so that simply locating a submarine epicenter is not sufficient basis for predicting a sea wave. However, prompt location of epicenters is very important, so it is planned to attach alarm devices to seismographs, so that they will give notice the moment they begin to operate. It is also planned to set out newly invented wave detectors, to give notice of abnormal movements in the water near the sea

waves' points of origin.

Observation of abnormal behavior on the part of the sea among the Aleutian islands or along the upper coasts of Alaska can be made, however, by properly located watchers, including Coast Guard personnel. Radio warnings of a sea wave thus caught in the act of getting started can be sent by Army and Navy radio, so that people on threatened coasts can get to safe places, taking valuable portable property and papers with them.

Since sea waves travel at an amazingly high speed, traversing the distance from the Aleutians to Hawaii in as little as five or six hours, it will be necessary to have all the warning service set-up constantly on the alert and ready to function smoothly and with the utmost possible quickness.

Since this is a pioneering effort, it will probably require several months to give observers the necessary special training, as well as to get the interdepartmental communications system into good running order.

Science News Letter, November 30, 1946

GENERAL SCIENCE

Fellowship Grants Are Available for Students

➤ MORE THAN \$15,000 in research fellowships for advanced study in scientific and industrial fields will be made available for the scholastic year 1947-48 by the General Electric Company Educational Fund.

Funds from the Charles A. Coffin Foundation and the Gerard Swope Foundation are being awarded for financial assistance up to \$1,500 annually for students seeking to continue research work. An additional \$500 grant for apparatus may be made. Applications deadline for the fellowships is Jan. 1, 1947.

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