

NEWS IN BRIEF

• **BIKINI RETURN:** Former inhabitants of Bikini Atoll, the U.S. nuclear test site in the South Pacific, have been given permission by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to return to the atoll. The last nuclear test at Bikini was 10 years ago. The natives were removed to another of the Marshall Islands when testing began more than 20 years ago. The island has been deemed safe for human habitation as a result of an AEC study conducted last year on residual radioactivity in the area. Some strontium-90 was found in coconut crabs, which will be destroyed; otherwise, the AEC found no significant threat to health and safety.

• **METRIC SYSTEM STUDY:** After a period of 9 years during which bills have been stalled in the House of Representatives, a bill authorizing a 3-year study of the proposed increased use of the metric system in the United States (*Science*, 5 July) was signed by President Johnson on 14 August. The bill provides that the study be conducted by the National Bureau of Standards of the Commerce Department on a year-to-year basis out of already appropriated funds at a cost not to exceed \$500,000 for the current fiscal year.

• **SEA-GRANT EXTENSION PROGRAM:** A compromise bill, which authorizes a 2-year extension of the Sea-Grant College program and increases financial support substantially, was signed by President Johnson on 14 August. The measure, introduced by Senator Claiborne Pell (D-Rhode Island) and Representative Paul G. Rogers (D-Florida), represents an effort to increase trained manpower for oceanography programs. The amount authorized is \$6 million for the current fiscal year and \$15 million for the succeeding one, compared with \$5 million authorized for last year.

• **NONPOLLUTING ENGINE:** Private industries in three countries are pooling their money and facilities in a 3-year \$7 million research project aimed at developing a nonpolluting automotive combustion engine. Eleven automobile and petroleum companies in the U.S., Japan, and Italy formed the Inter-Industry Emission Control (IIEC), which was launched last year to find

ways to eliminate the principal pollutants from incomplete combustion of petroleum. The Ford Motor Company is project manager, and the participating U.S. oil companies include American, Atlantic Richfield, Marathon, Mobil, Sohio, and Sun.

• **EARLY MAN DIG:** A California archeological project, which has been in dispute with holders of alleged mining claims nearby, has been given approval to continue its excavations. The Department of Interior has announced that the "Early Man Dig," located in the Calico Mountain area near San Bernardino, has been given permission to continue its excavations unhampered by 10-year-old mining claims, which were recently declared invalid. The archeological investigation, sponsored by the San Bernardino County Museum, has unearthed possible prehistoric man-made implements.

• **OHIO SCHOOL BOARD RESEARCH:** More than 70 school boards in Ohio are contributing their own tax-derived school funds for a research project aimed at identifying and solving educational problems. The 3-year applied research program, now funded at more than \$600,000, will be conducted largely by the Columbus Laboratories of Battelle Memorial Institute in the following problem areas: surveying public educational preferences; studying personnel negotiations; and evaluating and improving staff programs and administration.

• **NEW PUBLICATIONS:** *An Energy Model for the United States, Featuring Energy Balances for the Years 1947 to 1965 and Projections and Forecasts to the Years 1980 and 2000*, Information Circular 8384, may be obtained for 70¢ from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. *International Directory of Genetic Services* is available free of charge from the Medical Department, National Foundation—March of Dimes, 800 Second Avenue, New York 10017. *Public Health Service Grants and Awards, Fiscal Year 1967 Funds, Part I*, may be obtained at \$2 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402.

trips are out of the question) leaves the monorail and boards a minirail train for a 6-mile round trip to Yellowstone Canyon. Some parts of the canyon may be seen from the train itself, though it passes well back from the north rim of the canyon and is not visible from the south rim. The visitors make frequent stops, however, walking to various overlooks, then boarding other trains to make their way around the circuit. Later, the family gets back on the monorail but then leaves it again briefly for an excursion by aerial tramway to the summit of Mount Washburn. The family's visit to Yellowstone ends back at Gardner—after a tour of about 150 miles in which no one had to fight traffic.

According to present Park Service policy, the new systems would be used only as substitutes for roads which now exist or (as in the case of new parks) which would have to be built. Moreover, existing roads and parking lots, Rosenberg says, could be regraded, replanted, and allowed to return to nature. The slaughter of wildlife by heavy traffic would cease, he adds, for monorails would pose little hazard for deer and other creatures.

The idea of using monorails and other new systems as a substitute for park roads has gained currency among some conservationists outside the government as well as among Park Service officials. In fact, three conservationists—Joseph Penfold of the Izaak Walton League, Ira Gabrielson of the Wildlife Management Institute, and Ansel Adams, a nature photographer closely identified with the Sierra Club—served on the task force that drafted the Park Service's statement of current policy on roads and alternative systems.

Rosenberg believes the principal problem to be overcome in establishing the kind of park transport system he envisions is that of getting the money. By his computations, however, the cost of the new systems, on a per-passenger-mile basis, would be little more than that of the automobile-road system.

As Rosenberg is fully aware, Congress is not likely ever to provide funds for the radically new transport systems unless the public is ready to accept them. But, on this score, he is not pessimistic. All the traffic jams in urban, suburban, exurban, and now even park settings have not been for nothing, he feels. "People," he says, "are getting a little bit tired of their automobiles."

—LUTHER J. CARTER