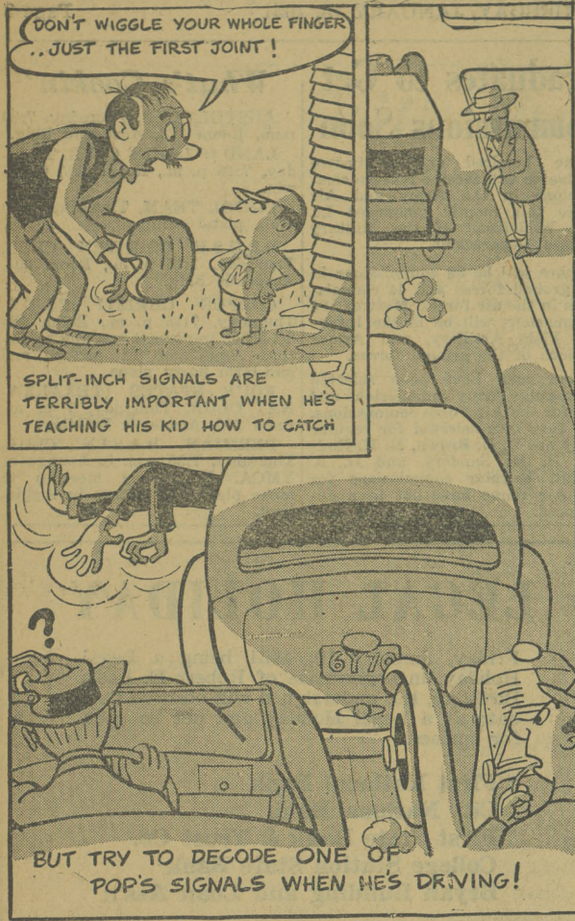


Maim Street

by Ralph Stein



# Reversible Props Aid Flyers To Make Descent-In A Hurry!

Washington, Jan. 18—(AP)—Having bombers that can operate above 40,000 feet, Air Force experts now want to know how to get them back down fast in emergencies. Rapid descents can mean life or death in case of fire in flight, personnel injuries or lack of oxygen through loss of cabin air pressure. The Air Force is studying the use of reverse thrust on the propellers to give the B-36 and the B-50 a high rate of drop with relatively slow forward speed. Its work began with tests on a C-54 four-engine transport loaned to the Curtiss-Wright Corp. Propeller Division for the purpose.

In propeller reversals the pitch or blade angle is changed to throw the air blast forward instead of rearward while the propeller continues to turn in the same direction.

That is what happens when airline pilots reverse the plane's propellers after landing, as nearly all modern transports are equipped to do. The forward blast works against the plane's momentum, slowing it down more quickly than wheel brakes and without regard for wet or icy runways.

The B-36, B-50 and B-29 have propellers reversible for landing brakes. In addition, the B-36 uses two of its six propellers in reverse while taxiing to save wear on brakes and tires.

The Curtiss-Wright experiments, under the direction of C-W's chief test pilot, Herbert O. Fisher, included 100 flights in which all four propellers were reversed. They showed immediately that the reverse pitch used for landing and

taxiing was unsatisfactory for in-flight braking. C-W settled on less than one-third as much "negative" pitch but used more revolutions per minute and more power.

The tests showed in general that reversed propeller thrust cut the time to get down safely from high altitude to one-third or less than needed for a normal emergency descent.

Why can't an airplane like the B-36 simply be dived down to low altitude, then leveled off and landed?

The answer is that it probably would be torn apart before it got near the ground.

All aircraft except such super-sonic test planes as the X-1 have

speed limits to prevent damage from what is known as the "compressibility" of air.

Combat craft built for unusual stresses, such as dive bombers, and equipped with air brakes can be dived straight down. Their design and equipment is not practical either for bombers or transports. Even dive bombers have been tested with reversing propellers to give them slower dive speeds for safety and accuracy.

Jet planes, of course, pose a special problem in dive speed control. Forward firing rocket engines have been considered. Two air force jet bomber types use parachutes for landing brakes and conceivably could use them in emergency dives.

# Oceanography Will Offer Ten Courses

The relatively new Department of Oceanography will offer ten new courses for the spring semester.

In addition, "Introduction to Oceanography" which is open to men having senior or graduate standing in the physical or biological sciences or in engineering will be presented.

Most of the new courses are advanced programs requiring prerequisites in oceanography.

Several graduate assistantships are available in connection with an oceanographic and meteorological survey of the Gulf of Mexico sponsored by the U. S. Navy Hydrographic Office and the Office of Naval Research.

The hydrographic office now has more than twenty positions open. Particularly needed are men with backgrounds in physics, meteorology and engineering.


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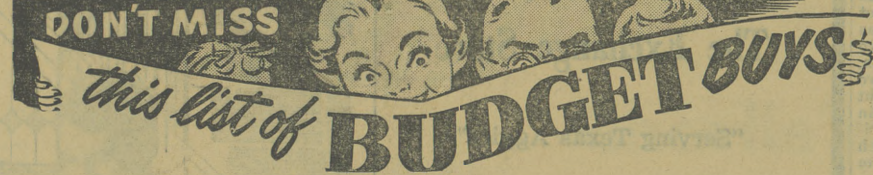
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# Swiss Build Wall of Steel Against Possible Aggression

Geneva, Jan. 18—(AP)—If a future aggressor ever launches an attack against Switzerland, he will face what is probably Europe's most powerful military force outside the Iron Curtain. Switzerland, though determined to remain aloof from any western military alliance, is carefully building up her defenses at an unprecedented rate. Most Swiss firmly believe that it was only the strength and efficiency of their army which discouraged Hitler from an invasion of Switzerland during World War II. On the theory that the Russians or any other future aggressive power may hesitate to attack Switzerland for the same reason, the Swiss Government has launched a five-year-plan to make the nation's defenses stronger than ever before.

The plan calls for expenditure of about \$320,000,000 during the five-year period, in addition to the regular annual expenditure of \$106,000,000 for the maintenance of the armed forces. With this money, the army is to be equipped with the most modern weapons and planes, the fortifications system is to be extended, and munitions and other war supplies are to be stored in sufficient quantities to enable the Alpine strongholds to resist an aggressor for years, if necessary. Any increase in the number of men in the army is impossible, because every able-bodied male Swiss citizen is already trained as a soldier and ready to take up arms at one hour's notice.

The principal aim of the military authorities is to increase the firepower of the individual soldier to a point an attacking army with extended communications lines would find difficult to equal. The new weapons to be drawn from home production and imports include armored long-range anti-tank guns on caterpillar tracks, armor-piercing bazookas, rapid-firing machine guns and rocket-firing jet planes. The Swiss Air Force already has about 75 Vampire jets purchased from Britain, and their production in Switzerland will be under British license. Only the engines will still be supplied by Britain. To underline their neutral attitude, the Swiss like to stress that they also import arms from the Soviet sphere, such as anti-tank guns from Czechoslovakia. But these supplies have been diminishing for months and recently stopped altogether.

The five-year-plan also calls for some reorganization of the armed forces to meet the requirements of modern warfare. Thus, special units are being set up to combat a possible attack with toxic and bacteriological weapons or atomic bombs. Under a tactical reorganization, every infantry unit is to be assigned a tank group under infantry command and the infantry itself is to be motorized wherever possible. Together with the streamlining of its military preparedness, the Swiss Government is carefully developing plans for the protection of the civilian population. Civil defense workers are being trained and food supplies to last many years are being laid in. Ration cards have been printed and are ready to issue to every man, woman and child at a moment's notice.

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