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Pioneer studies in earth penetration, using 1,000-pound electronically instrumented projectiles dropped 4,000 feet from helicopters, are being conducted this week at Texas A&M.

The joint tests involve Texas A&M's Civil Engineering Department and the Sandia Corporation

of Albuquerque, N. M. Sandia, a Western Electric subsidiary which operates under a non-profit contract with the Atomic Energy Commission, recently awarded \$50,000 to Texas A&M for earth penetration research.

Dr. Louis Thompson, associate

professor of civil engineering and principal investigator for the project, said the tests are designed to provide data concerning the fundamental physical processes involved in the rapid movement of earth.

The field is so new that until recently there was no word to

describe it. Sandia has since coined the term "terrodynamics."

Terrodynamics, notes Sandia's project supervisor, W. N. Caudle, can be likened to aerodynamics. However, instead of dealing with the relationship of a vehicle to atmospheric environments, terrodynamics is concerned with the "flows" and resistance of various earth materials—soil, rock, water and ice—to penetrating vehicles. In the current series of tests at Texas A&M's Easterwood Airport, flat-nosed 10-foot projectiles are released from helicopters hovering 4,000 feet overhead and strike the earth's surface at approximately 250 feet per second. The projectiles are equipped with small parachutes to limit penetration to about 12 feet. The parachutes also support small radio transmitters which relay data from instruments inside the projectile to associated ground equipment.

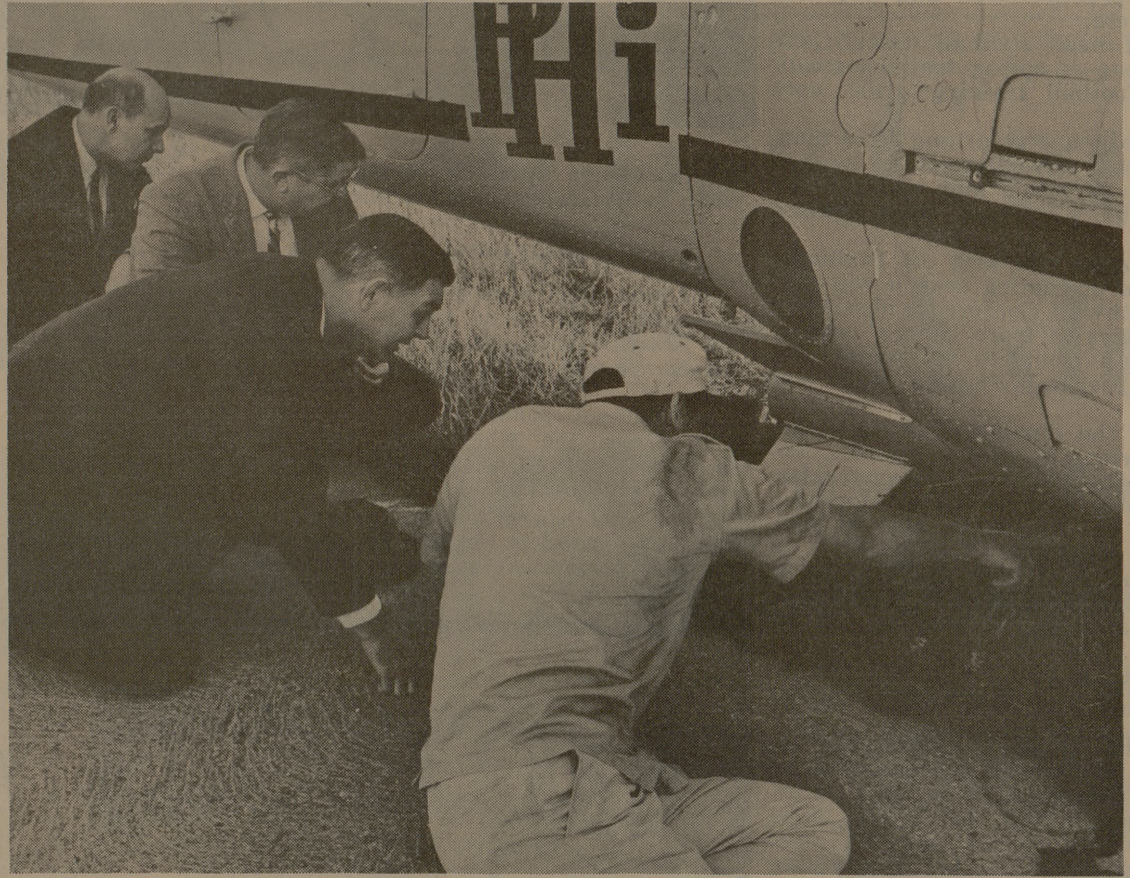
The instruments include strain gauges to measure changes in the vehicle's length, accelerometers to measure deceleration time during the vehicle's earth penetration and a velocity gauge.

Following the penetrations, a team of Texas A&M and Sandia specialists make detailed studies of earth formations caused by the entering vehicles.

The tests also include precise excavations to study effects on the sub-soil and to retrieve the vehicle for analysis.

Caudle said information obtained from the experiments has a variety of practical applications. It could, for example, be

used to help determine soil profiles for engineering projects in inaccessible areas, such as might be encountered in canal construction. Conceivably, the process also could be employed for disposal of radioactive materials.

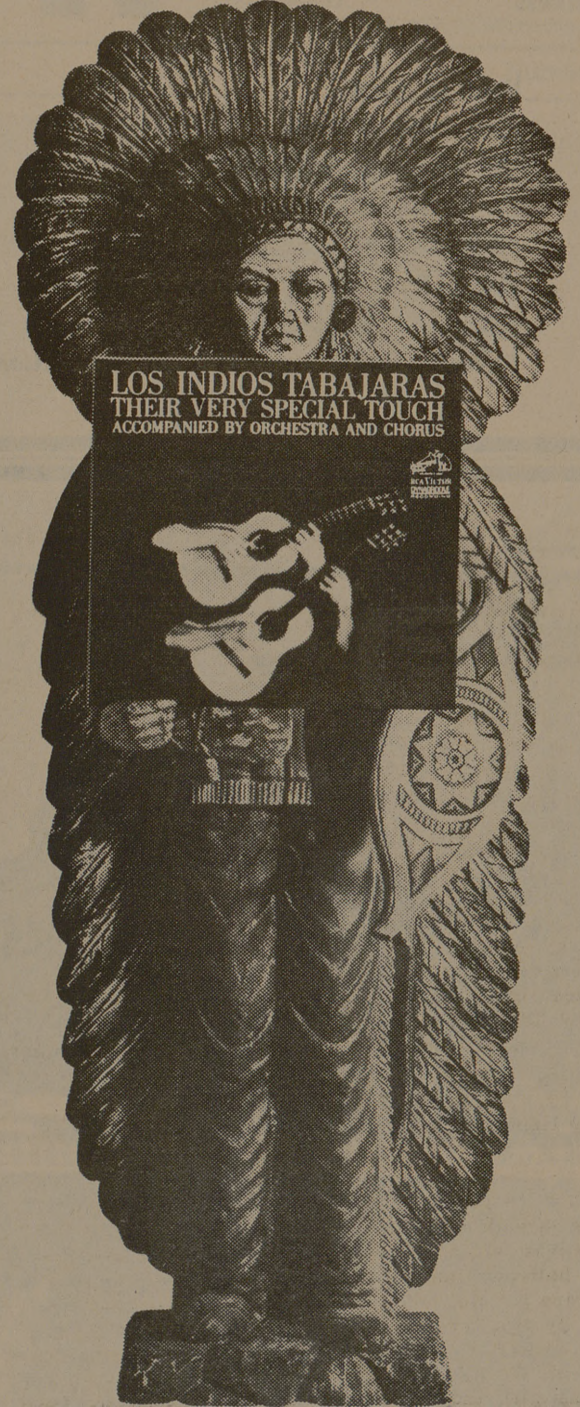


EARTH PENETRATION TESTS

Texas A&M engineering officials peer beneath a helicopter for a close look at the fin assembly on a projectile used in a new earth penetration research project. Making the inspection are (from left) Dr. Charles Samson, Dr. Louis Thompson and Dean Fred Benson.

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Bulletin Board

TODAY
The Aggie Wives Bridge Club will meet in the Memorial Student Center at 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY
The Houston Hometown Club meets in room 201 of the Physics Building at 7:30 p.m. Officers for the coming year will be elected and plans for next year will be discussed.

The Mid-County Hometown Club will meet in room 208 of the Academic Building at 7:30 p.m.

The El Paso Hometown Club meets in room 3-C of the MSC at 7:30 p.m. to elect officers.

The Bell County Hometown Club will meet in room 205 of the Academic Building at 7 p.m. Officers will be elected for the coming year.

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SPECIAL NOTICE
SUL ROSS LODGE NO. 1300 A.F. & A.M. Called meeting, Thursday, April 20, 7 p. m. The P.C. Degree will be conferred.
Bennie A. Zinn, W.M.
Joe Woolket, Sec'y 43312

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OFFICIAL NOTICE
Official notices must arrive in the Office of Student Publications before deadline of 1 p. m. of the day preceding publication.

Any of my students who would like former examinations may pick them up. J. T. Kent, Math Dept. 43314

THE GRADUATE COLLEGE
Final Examination for the Doctoral Degree Name: Airhart, Tom Patterson Degree: Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering
Dissertation: The Response of a Pile-Soil System in a Cohesive Soil as a Function of the Excess Pore Water Pressure and the Engineering Properties of the Soil Time: April 20, 1967 at 3:00 p. m. Place: Conference Room in Texas Transportation Institute
Wayne C. Hall
Dean of Graduate Studies 43212

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Those undergraduate students who have 95 semester hours of credit may purchase the A&M ring. The hours passed at the time of the preliminary grade report, April 3, 1967, may be used in satisfying the 95 hours requirement. Those students qualifying under this regulation may leave their name with the Ring Clerk in the Registrar's Office in order that she may check their records to determine their eligibility to order the ring. Orders for the rings will be taken between April 17 and May 31, 1967. These rings will be returned to this office for further delivery on or about July 5, 1967. The Ring Clerk is on duty from 8:00 a. m. to 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday.
H. L. Heaton, Director of Admissions and Registrar 42032

NOTICE—PRE-VETERINARY MEDICINE STUDENTS
Pre-veterinary medicine students who expect to qualify as applicants for admission to the professional curriculum of the College of Veterinary Medicine in September 1967 may secure application forms in the Registrar's Office beginning Monday, February 20, 1967. May 1, 1967 is the deadline for filing applications and transcripts with the Registrar.
H. L. Heaton, Director of Admissions and Registrar 39612

The 1966-67 official directory of offices, staff and students is now available. You may send your orders (interdepartmental orders, etc.) to the Student Publications Office, YMCA Building. The price is \$1.00 per directory.

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