

# Hurricane's wind greatest on earth

"Hurricanes are the greatest storms on earth," TAMU meteorologist Dr. Dennis Driscoll said. "During the first 60 years of this century, 17,000 lives were lost while property damage amounted to \$5 billion in the United States alone."

"Texas holds two records for hurricanes," he said. "The Galveston Hurricane in 1900 caused the most deaths — 6,000 to 8,000 — while Hurricane Beulah in 1967 spawned the most tornadoes, over 100."

"High winds can cause major damage," Driscoll said. Hurricanes have sustained winds of 74 mph or greater and in an extreme hurricane the strongest gust may exceed 200 mph.

"With winds around 50 mph tree branches can break and significant damage can occur to structures," he said. "At 160 mph over 100,000 pounds of force would be exerted on the side of a house 10 feet high and 100 feet long. With a driving rain the force is even greater. Few buildings are designed to withstand such force."

"The storm surge is an abnormal rise in the level of the sea which causes the greatest concentration of death and destruction in a hurricane," Patrick McCormack, graduate researcher said. "The continual pounding of the storm surge can destroy almost any manmade structure."

"When Hurricane Camille hit the Mississippi coast in 1969, the storm surge destroyed numerous structures, including a three-story, 40-unit apartment building," he said. "Only the foundations remained. About a dozen tenants held a hurricane party during the storm. To my knowledge their bodies were never found."

"In Hurricane Audrey in 1957 it is thought that the majority of people who drowned sought safety by climbing into high trees and then fell into the rising flood waters after they were bitten by snakes also taking refuge in the trees," Dr. Driscoll said.

"Floodwaters of the storm surge usually come in like a high tide but rise much faster," he said. "Survivors have described the sudden inflow as 'great walls of water which swept all before them'. Forecast of this condition is beyond present

capabilities. "Another type of destruction in a hurricane is the rainfall," Driscoll said. "Heavy rainfall can cause flash floods and river system floods, both of which can produce extreme damage."

"Beulah's rainfall exceeded 30 inches in some places, which caused severe flooding in South Texas and North Central Mexico," he said. "It also caused the Rio Grande to overflow its banks."

"Tornadoes are spawned by hurricanes," Driscoll said. "Beulah holds the record for tornadoes with more than 100. Generally tornadoes occur to the right of the direction of hurricane movement between 60 to 240 miles from the eye. Tornadoes occur more frequently when a hurricane moves northward."

Driscoll said that man is also a destructive force during hurricanes.

"During every disaster there are people who take advantage of the confusion and misery to loot and pilfer," he said.

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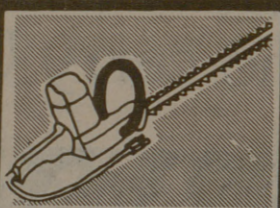
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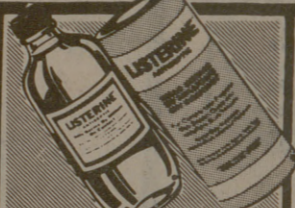
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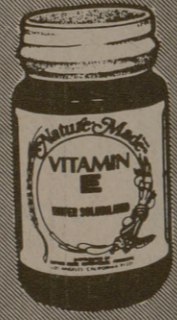
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### Relations cooled

(continued from Page 1)

noticeable difference. "It could in Thailand," Maxwell said. "Particularly if it were done with delicacy and without offending the Thai people."

"We have been very gauche (along these lines)," he said. The reason, as Maxwell views it, is partly because of Congressional pressure on AID, forcing the agency to "do things they know are not wise."

"AID knows better than to give assistance on a need basis," he added. He also said that there are people in AID and the U. S. government who are sensitive in dealings with the Thais.

The Thai-speaking TAMU official stated that Thailand is "a nation of wonderful people who, with one exception, have a history of skillful diplomacy."

The exception was abandonment of a position of neutrality in striking an alliance with the U. S. in the Vietnam war.

"Now they are in the process of pulling back from being a completely staunch U. S. ally," Maxwell said.

"But the Thai are a tolerant, forgiving people, despite their own biases and mistakes that we have made," he said. "They are charming and engaging. We could learn much from them. They are a gentle people who abhor violence. In their last revolution, some people were killed. Several before that had no injuries, much less casualties."

In Thai student riots against Japan, Maxwell said, demonstrations consisted "almost totally of burning paper models of Japanese cars."

Thailand is a country the size of France with a 40 million population that is rapidly growing, Maxwell said. Its economy is based on rice exports, in which it is the world's largest.

"If the Thai can cut down population growth and improve their agriculture," he said, "I think they will be able to make it — and stay non-Communist."

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