

Gulf ports need improving to keep worldwide pace

Port improvements are needed in the United States, especially the Gulf Coast, to keep pace with worldwide trends, according to a Texas A&M University report.

Other maritime nations are shipping cargo in very large commercial craft (VLCC) and ultra large commercial craft (ULCC), obtaining important cost savings.

The foreign vessels carry five to eight times more cargo and operate out of onshore deepwater ports. Most cannot operate in Gulf of Mexico ports.

Very few such ports are found in the United States.

The shortfall in U.S. port facilities capable of handling these deep-draft vessels, coupled with a rapidly growing volume of imports and exports of bulk commodities, has resulted in a critical need for im-

proved port facilities in this country," indicates a research report at Texas A&M University.

"Just a few years ago, the U.S. could boast that its ports were capable of accommodating the largest ships in service," noted Dr. John B. Herbich. "Today, other nations have moved considerably ahead in both port construction and shipbuilding."

The onshore deepwater port, pursued almost exclusively in Europe, is the answer here, he says.

Research by J. Wallace Berriman and Herbich recommend improved channel designs for onshore deepwater ports at Corpus Christi, Freeport, Galveston and Port Arthur.

Herbich chairs the Ocean Engineering Program of Texas A&M's Civil Engineering Department, and directs the Center for Dredging

Studies. Berriman was a graduate student in ocean engineering.

Their studies indicate that an onshore deepwater port is more flexible in the commodities it can handle. Not influenced by winds and waves to significant degree, it would have maximum availability.

Only low visibility conditions which make navigation hazardous would be a drawback, Berriman and Herbich note.

Other reasons for onshore deepwater ports are projected growth in oil imports and refining, and sizable increases in seaborne movement of petroleum products between processing and consuming regions. Also, depletion of domestic reserves of critical materials such as iron ore probably will lead to more imports in future years.

The engineers pointed out that changes in American foreign trade

policies will likely emphasize worldwide marketing of coal and agricultural products.

"Since the economy of transportation tends to favor the use of VLCC's for bulk movements such as these, it appears that deepwater facilities for dry bulk commodities and petroleum products will become highly desirable," Herbich said.

Port designs they suggest are based on a top vessel size of 265,000 deadweight tons. Savings provided by larger ships is negligible, the report states.

"Not only kooks see UFOs"

UFO theories tested

Psychologists who hypnotized persons claiming to have been kidnapped by space ships say they believe the victims were telling the truth. They're just not sure the stories were "real."

The psychologists, in reports to the American Psychological Association's annual convention, also said the popular notion that only "kooks" see UFOs was wrong.

Dr. W.C. McCall of Anaheim, Calif., said he used hypnosis to make 35 people relive their alleged abductions by space beings and the emotions many of them showed "seems to lend credence to the story that they are telling."

But McCall and Alvin Lawson of California State University at Long Beach both cautioned there is a fine line between memories of a real event and fantasies so real the person believes them even under hypnosis.

"The greatest danger (in using hypnosis for UFO investigations), may be that witnesses subtly merge fantasy and reality in close encounter reports — without witness or hypnotist being aware of what is happening," Lawson said.

But Lawson stressed, "If any part of UFO abductees' narratives can be considered true, they will have to be taken seriously by traditional science and scientists in the future."

Dr. Leo Sprinkle of the University of Wyoming, had another theory on how the stories of people who claim to have been kidnapped by alien beings can be "real" yet false.

Sprinkle said he has tested some 150 people of all ages and walks of life who claimed to have seen UFOs, and about 25 of them claimed to have been abducted or studied by alien beings during their experience.

"I have concluded, tentatively, there is little evidence to support the 'psychosis hypothesis' that only kooks see flying saucers," said Sprinkle, who added the two UFOs he saw spurred his interest in the field.

"My personal and professional bias is to accept, tentatively, the claims of UFO abductions as 'real,'" Sprinkle reported to the convention.

"However, I do not know if these 'abductees' have experienced physical abduction or whether they have experienced 'out of body' events. In either case, the experiences seem real to the abductee."

"Out of body" experiences are little-known events in which persons say their "souls" leave their bodies and travel around independently, floating across solid walls and visiting far off places in a matter of seconds.

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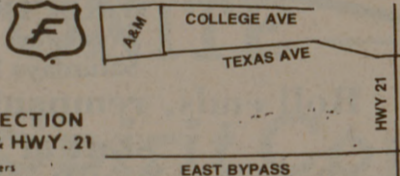
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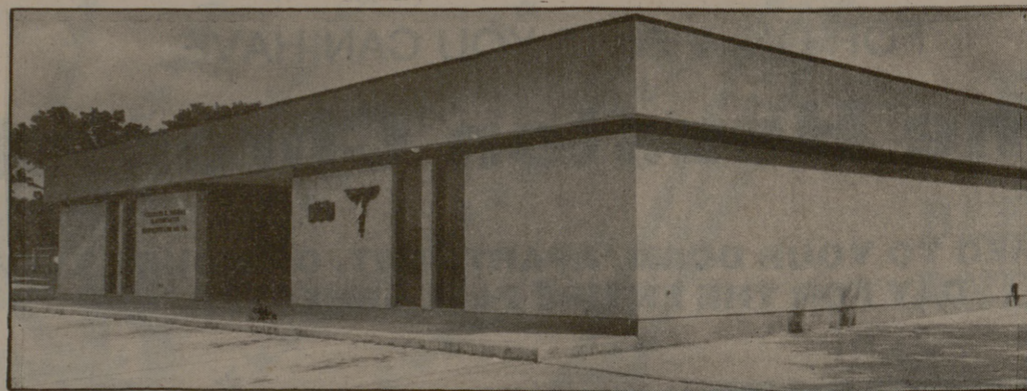
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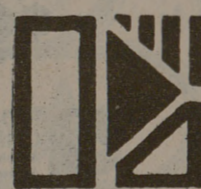
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