

More than 260 homeless

Landslide cause unknown

United Press International
LAGUNA BEACH, Calif. — A pretty hillside full of expensive homes is self-destructing, doing \$3 to \$4 million in damage and leaving hundreds homeless. So far, nobody can say why.

More than 260 people spent the night out of their ruined or threatened homes while police, firemen and others kept watch on the five-acre tract that began coming apart Monday morning.

At least 24 homes — valued from \$100,000 to \$200,000 — were toppled and engulfed by the mysterious landslides. Some 14 others were damaged, at least six beyond repair because of foundations splitting.

"The ground is still moving and settling," said Police Chief Jon Sparks. "The next 24 hours will be critical in terms of more slippage."

Engineers and geologists were trying to determine what happened, but City manager Fred Soloman said the cause was a mystery. The Caltech seismological laboratory in Pasadena, 60 miles to the north, said

there had been no earthquakes in the area for at least 10 days. There has been no rain for weeks and no heavy rain since last Spring.

One woman reportedly injured her shoulder when she fell fleeing the landslide in exclusive Bluebird Canyon in the hills half a mile inland from the Pacific.

Most residents were asleep just before dawn when they were awakened by the popping and cracking of timbers and foundations in their homes. Windows suddenly shattered. Streets bulged. Yards dropped out of sight.

Houses swayed and sank down hillsides that had not been there minutes before.

Electric lines snapped apart with reports like rifle fire. Gas hissed from broken mains. Police said it was very lucky there was no fire.

"I stopped my car on a small hump and all of a sudden the front end dropped four feet," said Police Officer Greg Bartz, one of the first to reach the scene.

"It was really eerie. You could

hear houses crashing, water running, gas hissing and my heart beating very fast."

Police and residents ran through the area shouting for people still able to get up and run.

"I heard this voice calling 'Mrs. Pitts, Mrs. Pitts, come out as you are, your house is leaving,'" said Adell Pitts.

"I walked out and didn't look back," she said. Seconds later, half the home she had lived in for 11 years plunged into a yawning abyss.

Bartz said one resident "wanted to stay — I guess he wanted to ride his house down the hill, but he finally saw the light."

Bartz's patrol car was left stranded when the street collapsed around it. Hearing gas hissing from a broken pipeline beneath him, he said "I turned off the engine, turned off the lights and bailed out."

Laguna Beach, famous for its summer Arts Festival, is one of the most beautiful spots on the southern California coast — its hills rising from the sea often compared to the

French Riviera.

The earth shifted as much as 40 feet vertically and 30 to 40 feet laterally. One fissure was 50 feet long and another crack was 30 feet long and 30 feet deep.

"The earth gave way and then started piling up on them. We saw four homes that were completely covered with dirt."

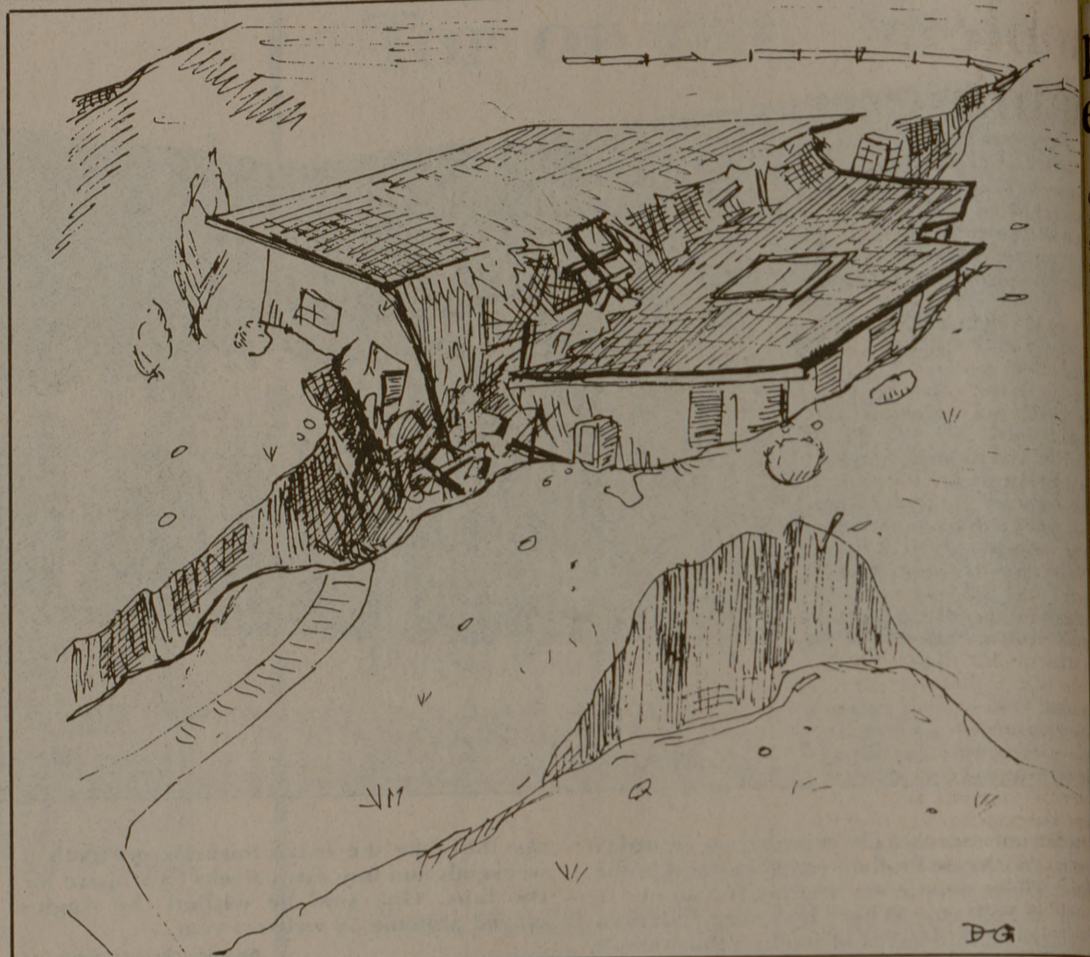
"We woke up to a loud thud," said Anne Stewart. "There was crackling on the roof like it was raining. We went over to our window and we could see our trash cans rattling together."

"About that time a police loudspeaker told us to walk in their direction. My son and I walked toward the police car but the lights were blinding and we fell into this big crack. The road had just opened up."

Some people fled with only their night clothes.

Others joked. "Real estate has dropped in our neighborhood," cracked Jane Golden, referring to the skyrocketing price of houses in Southern California. "Prices seem to be sliding."

"We've got to laugh," said her neighbor, Raffaella Yates, "because there's not a damn thing we can do."



Rhodes Scholar applications must be returned by Oct. 17

By LIZ BAILEY
Battalion Reporter

Rhodes scholars applications from Texas A&M University students who will graduate before October 1979 have until Oct. 17 to apply for Rhodes scholarships from Oxford University in England.

"They are probably the most competitive scholarships in the world," says Dr. Paul Van Riper, chairman of the committee which selects Rhodes scholars from Texas A&M and also a professor of political science at Texas A&M.

Students as well as those who have been residents of Texas for the past two years may apply to the committee for the scholarships, he said.

The Texas A&M committee also includes Dr. R. Ballinger (professor emeritus of English) and Dr. John F. Reading, associate professor of physics.

Both men have traveled and lectured in England. Reading was chosen because he was formerly a student at Oxford, Van Riper said.

The Rhodes Scholarships were begun in the early 1900s as directed in the will of Cecil Rhodes, a British colonial pioneer, statesman and Oxford graduate.

Rhodes's will specified that selection of recipients should be based on quality of intellect, character and accomplishments. Applicants must be single, male, and at least 18 years old, but not yet 23.

In 1976, legal changes in the United Kingdom opened the competition to women. Since then, approximately half of those selected have been women, said Van Riper.

Van Riper said the committee will send one or two of the outstanding applications to a state selective committee. That group reviews the applications and interviews some of the applicants.

It then sends some of its names to the regional committee, where the elimination process is repeated. Eventually, all but four of the candidates from each region are eliminated.

At Oxford, the 32 American scholars study with Rhodes scholars from 16 other countries.

Most years, there are about 180 Rhodes Scholars at Oxford.

Van Riper said that Texas A&M has averaged about one Rhodes Scholar every 25 years.

James W. Thomas, class of 1922, was the first Rhodes Scholar from Texas A&M.

Paul T. Hasse, class of 1976, was the most recent recipient. Hasse scholarship was recently extended for a third year. Van Riper said it is rarely done and indicative of Hasse's excellent work.

Although there have only been three Rhodes Scholars from Texas A&M, Van Riper said this is more than most universities have.

The University of Texas has had more Rhodes Scholars than any other Texas university, Van Riper said.

Rhodes scholars chosen this year will enter Oxford in October 1979.

Magazine suggests ways the government helps consumer out of car repair 'jungle'

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Should the government pay for surveys of au-

tomobile repair shops to let consumers know which ones do a good job?

That suggestion for helping consumers out of the car repair jungle was offered to Congress recently by Robert Krughoff, who publishes a consumer advice magazine called "Checkbook."

He said Congress should give federal grant money to organizations in communities throughout the country to set up teams that would evaluate local car repair shops and publish the results.

Krughoff's magazine does that already for his circulation area, Washington, D.C. He estimates the cost of establishing a similar system in every major area of the country at about \$5 million a year.

He said the price tag would be less if the organization doing the ratings charged a nominal fee for the survey results.

In his Washington ratings, Krughoff said, he has found no correlation between how much a shop charges and how good the work is. Shops listed by the National Institute of Automotive Service Excellence as having tested, competent mechanics did not have more satisfied customers than shops without the rating and dealerships are about

twice as likely to be rated as inferior by customers as independent shops.

The same congressional hearing was also told of a new government survey that indicates consumers are far more likely to have a problem with a car than almost any other product they buy under warranty, and to have a harder time getting it fixed.

The Federal Trade Commission survey indicated about 25 percent of car buyers who suffered problems were dissatisfied with the outcome, compared with about 8 percent for all other products.

In addition, nearly 30 percent of motor vehicles are delivered with a problem covered by a warranty, compared with 7 percent for other under-warranty products; and 30 percent of car problems took more than one month to resolve, compared with about 14 percent for other consumer products.

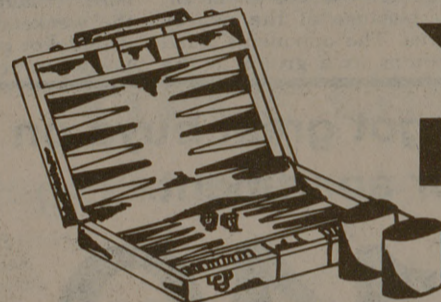
FTC officials have told Congress the federal warranty law needs to be toughened to address the situation. They suggested consumers be guaranteed the right to collect lawyers' fees when they sue an automobile dealer or company; have a better chance to file class action suits, and be allowed to collect the price of taxis or rental cars during the time their cars in shops.

A report on two useful publications: —The Food Co-op Directory lists about 3,000 U.S. and Canadian food co-ops. The nonprofit directory that publishes the annual directory estimates that consumers can save up to 30 percent on their grocery bills each month in exchange for a few hours of work every month co-op. The directory is available for \$3 (\$6 for businesses, institutions and government agencies) by writing to the Food Co-op Directory, Girard SE, Albuquerque, N.M. 87106.

—The Consumer Information Center's latest catalog of government publications. The Center, which mails out a vast variety of pamphlets on request, says its popular free offering is called "What to Discard." The booklet tells you you really need to hang onto and other purposes. The full Consumer Information Catalog is free from the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colo., 81009.

Write to Buyer's Billboard, 315 National Press Bldg., Washington, D.C., 20045 with your personal replies but attempts will be made to answer letters where possible.

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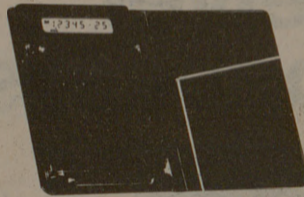
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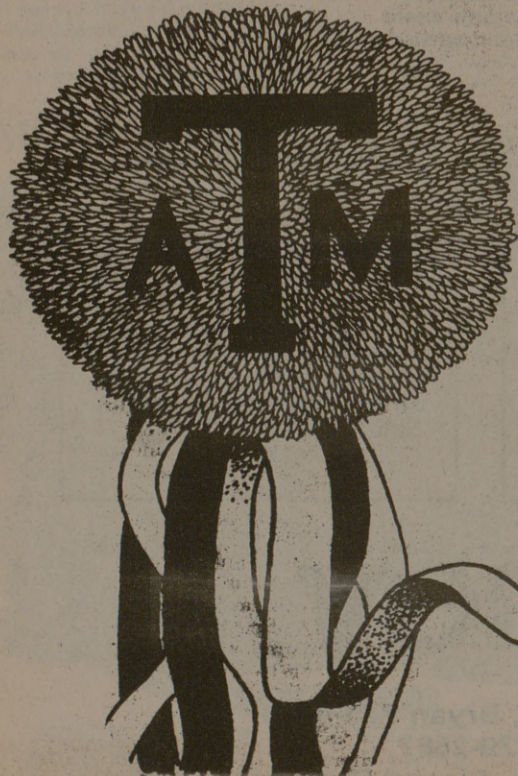
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