



THE VILLIAN . . . A sea urchin typical of those which are killing off the kelp forest near Palos Verdes Peninsula is inspected by Dr. Wheeler North. The Cal Tech professor, after diving to get a close look at the kelp plants off Abalone Cove, believes a County-funded experimental project in kelp restoration will succeed through reduction of the urchin population.

Plan May Save Area Kelp Beds

It appears the once abundant kelp beds off the Palos Verdes Peninsula can be restored.

That's the opinion of Dr. Wheeler North, noted Cal Tech professor, who is conducting an experimental kelp restoration program off the Peninsula.

Dr. North is working under a contract with the county, Supervisor Burton W. Chace. "In diving, we found only one adult kelp plant and 12 juvenile plants alive," Dr. North said. "They were in shallow water and were being heavily grazed."

"If these kelp beds can be regenerated, it means a boom for the sportfisherman and the commercial fishing industry," Chace said. He pointed out that kelp beds are favorite feeding grounds for most ocean fish.

Dr. North, who feels more at home in a wet suit than the usual dress of a university professor, says there is an even chance the kelp beds around the Peninsula can be restored.

"I was concerned at first that the experiment may have been started too late," he said. "However, in diving I found that there were a few

small kelp plants alive." **THE PRESENT** experiment is being conducted in the Abalone Cove area of the Peninsula shoreline. If this succeeds, the program can be expanded.

It had been estimated that there were 50 kelp plants alive at the Abalone Cove experimental site. This is not so, according to Dr. North. "In diving, we found only one adult kelp plant and 12 juvenile plants alive," Dr. North said. "They were in shallow water and were being heavily grazed."

"We will transplant them to deeper water and will cage them so the fish cannot graze," he said.

"ONCE THE PLANTS take hold," the scientist will open an assault on sea urchins. The spiny sea creature thrives on kelp plants and kills the vegetation in the process.

Funds to cover costs of the experiment come out of the County Fish and Game fund, which is financed through fines.

Local industry has offered to assist in the project by providing boats, dockage and manpower without charge.

A Letter To My Son

By Tom Rische

High School Teacher and Youth Worker

Dear Bruce,

In a few years, when you get old enough, I imagine we'll hear something like this from you: "Gee, Dad, why can't I go to Mexico? All the other guys are going."

Such cries grow particularly loud at Easter and during summer. Although those under 18 can't cross the border without written permission, many obtain it.

Having been in Mexico several times, including my first—and probably last—as a youth group leader, I'm leary of these teenage group excursions. The reason is that many teenagers go, they'll admit frankly, is to do things their parents wouldn't approve of.

Reasons may be simply to go surfing or to see another country or to buy souvenirs, ranging from straw hats or transistors to dirty pictures and switchblade knives.

For some, the lure is alcohol, which is pretty generally available to people of any age. For others, it's a place to look for kicks they haven't tried.

Whether a teenager is looking for trouble when he goes south of the border, his chances of finding it are considerably higher than at home. Mexican law views things differently than ours. One youth group leader spent several days in jail because his charges bought some booze. A father had to pay \$10,000 to get his injured son back to the U.S. after a Mexican auto accident. Temptations are great, and consequences potentially disastrous.

Yours for seeing the U.S.A. first,
Your dad.

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