

Automobile Deaths Top War Fatalities

Comparative Study Released By Casualty Company

An average of 33 American soldiers were killed daily in Korea during the first year of the war, while at home automobile deaths averaged 99 a day, a comparative study of war and traffic fatalities made by the Association of Casualty and Surety Companies discloses.

Close to 12,000 combat deaths have occurred among United States forces in Korea since hostilities started on June 25, 1950, according to Defense Department reports. On the eve of the war's first anniversary the Association's accident prevention department estimated that the nation's traffic dead during the same 12-month period totals about 36,050, three times the U. S. death toll in Korean battles.

Traffic deaths currently are seven times heavier than U. S. war fatalities, however, with the estimated June average of 93 lives lost daily on highways almost equaling the low weekly average of 95 soldiers killed in action in Korea as the war entered its 12th month.

American military deaths in all of the nation's wars, including the first year of the Korean conflict, have reached a total of 998,000 in 176 years and two months since the Battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775, the study shows. In the 51 years and six months since the first U. S. automobile death occurred at the turn of the century, nearly 980,000 men, women and children have lost their lives in traffic accidents.

In a strange historic parallel, both "GI-X" and "Victim X," the millionth victims to be killed by U. S. wars and automobiles, may die only a few weeks apart this year if the war continues, instead of within a few months of each other, as predicted last January by Julien H. Harvey, manager of the Association's accident prevention department.

The unknown soldier who will become "GI-X" if the Korean war continues apparently has been given a respite of several months more of life as a result of far lighter casualties recently, Mr. Harvey observed. Combat deaths fell off nearly two-thirds a month ago to the surprisingly low rate of 13 to 15 fatalities a day, or 90 to 100 a week. This compared with a high average of 40 a day, or 275 a week, two months ago. An average of 210 U. S. soldiers was killed in action weekly during the year; 253 a week in March, 275 in April and 125 weekly in May.

Total U. S. war deaths since 1775 are now within 2,000 of the historic million mark and automobile fatalities since 1900 about 20,000 under 1,000,000. But, Mr. Harvey pointed out, the increasing seasonal rise in traffic casualties is fast closing the time gap between the expected deaths of "GI-X" and "Victim X." The totals for war and traffic deaths are now only 18,000 apart, compared to 42,000

MAN FROM MARS—A soldier tests a regenerating respirator attached to an Aracig mask. He is one of the U. S. Army Ground Forces' men testing equipment for the sub-zero temperatures of Alaskan maneuvers.



most modern equipment for U. S. armed forces. Home front workers in labor and industry do the rest.

a year ago when military fatalities at the start of the Korean war stood at 986,000 and traffic deaths had reached 944,000. In 12 months that 42,000 difference has been more than cut in half.

The automobile toll may rise steadily to an average of 115 deaths a day, last December's peak rate, he emphasized, unless intensive national and local highway safety campaigns are started immediately to reduce traffic accidents and save a large number of lives on the home front. During the last six months of 1950 street and highway deaths averaged 108 a day.

A 7 per cent increase in traffic fatalities during the first four months this year over the same 1950 period, as reported by the National Safety Council, indicates the prospect of a far heavier automobile death toll later this year and the urgent need for immediate drastic action to curb speeding and drinking-and-driving, the major causes of traffic accidents, Mr. Harvey declared.

"Accident X," in which the millionth automobile fatality will occur, is still expected next December, he said, although an intensive traffic safety campaign seeking to postpone it may delay the death of "Victim X" until early in 1952.

"Victim X" may be killed on Christmas Day or near December 25 if present high traffic death rates are not reduced, the study indicated. "GI-X" might be killed on or about Armistice Day, November 11, dedicated to the nation's war dead, if Korean fighting continues with U. S. combat deaths running at the recent low rate of approximately 100 a week, according to the study. On the other hand, should these fatalities return to earlier high rates near 300 a week, the new unknown soldier symbolizing the first million lives lost in America's wars might die as early as mid-August.

American battle casualties in Korea during the war's first year totaled about 75,000 including 12,000 killed in action, nearly 12,000 missing, and only 18,000 wounded, according to

Defense Department reports. Non-battle casualties, which included frost-bite victims and sick and injured soldiers in Japan as well as Korea, 85 per cent of whom were returned to duty, totaled nearly 73,000 in 11 months.

The aggregate of U. S. battle and non-battle casualties in 12 months is approximately 150,000, but the non-battle category included "minor ailments," General J. Lawton Collins, Army Chief of Staff, told the Senate Committee a month ago when these casualties were reported for the first time.

Since the war started nearly 1,300,000 men, women and children have been killed or injured on the home front by automobiles, Mr. Harvey estimated. The total of traffic-injured, nearly 1,262,000 is more than 25 times the number of U. S. soldiers wounded in Korea and nine times greater than all American battle and non-battle casualties, with deaths excluded, in the same period.

Since 1900, he added, automobiles have injured more than 30,500,000 motorists and pedestrians. The com-

binated total of 31,480,000 killed and injured in traffic since the advent of the automobile exceeds the entire pre-Civil War U. S. population of 31,443,391 in 1860 by nearly 40,000, Mr. Harvey pointed out.

A 25 per cent reduction in the nation's traffic casualties from the 35,000 killed in 1950, as estimated by the National Safety Council, would save about 8,775 lives in a single year, Mr. Harvey declared. Similar reductions in injuries and traffic accidents would mean 300,000 fewer persons would be hurt and several million accidents would be prevented in the same 12-month period.

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Garden Time

By ROBERT SCHMIDT

Raspberries and dewberries have just about completed bearing for this season, and now is the time to prune them. To understand why we prune them at this time, we should know something about the growth and fruiting habits of these crops. Raspberries and dewberries bear most of their crops on new shoots that come out of canes of last season's wood. Each season, after bearing a crop, these canes will die and their place will be taken by new canes which come up from the roots of the plant. The old canes, therefore, should be removed as soon as the crop is harvested. This practice will give more room for the

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new canes to develop as well as to get rid of diseased plant materials.

In Eastern North Carolina a slightly different procedure is used for dewberries. As soon as the crop is harvested, all canes, both old and young, are removed at the ground. Then the land is cultivated and a top-dressing of nitrate of soda is given the plants. In a few days new shoots will appear and make sufficient growth during the rest of the season to produce a good crop the next year. This new growth is allowed to run along the ground and is not tied up to stakes until next spring.

This practice, as outlined, gives a fair control of anthracnose disease of dewberries. The plant growth that is cut off at the ground should be destroyed by burning. In the mountain

areas the season is not always long enough to permit the removal of new canes. In that case only the old canes are removed.

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