

## FIFTY YEARS AGO ...

---

Atlantis, the lost continent, has always been an ideal topic for speculations.

No definitive conclusions have been reached to-date by scientists. However, it could be interesting to remember here the approach to this subject made by Captain Gilbert T. RUDE (U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey) and published in the IHR, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, May 1941.

'... Now that the technique of modern hydrography has made feasible the extension of accurate and correlated marine surveys farther and farther seaward, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that the modern hydrographer through such surveys may yet obtain evidence, beyond that of a circumstantial nature, that Atlantis was more than a figment of classic imagination. Today, beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, there exist traces of what conceivably could have been a continent of the not-distant geologic past when the waters of the oceans, as some geologists claim, were several thousand feet below their present level. The Atlantic Ridge, bounded by the 2,000-fathom contour, extends the entire length of the Atlantic. The Azores, the surviving peaks of Atlantis, rise above the surface of the sea, and throughout the ridge are large areas inclosed within the 1,000-fathom and the 1,500-fathom submarine contours.

An accurate, modern hydrographic survey of this well-defined ridge would indicate the character of the topography, whether definitely submarine or of a possibly subaerial erosive nature similar to that which is now known to exist along the continental slope of North America through surveys made during the past decade by the Coast and Geodetic Survey. If the topography of the ridge is shown by such a survey to be of a subaerial character, evidence would thus be furnished that during some geologic age the ridge was above the sea level of that period, evidence which would be more conclusive than any yet advanced of the existence of Atlantis. ...

Based on his studies of the North American Continental Slope and that of the Congo, Dr. VEATCH places the former sea level at approximately 12,000 feet below its present level, and from an interpretation of the silting of the Congo trench estimates the time of the return of the ocean to its present level at about 10,000 years ago. It is to be noted that this time approximates the legendary time of the destruction of Atlantis — about 11,500 years ago ! ...

A survey of the vast area comprising the Atlantic Ridge well merits the co-operation of leading maritime nations. Its cost would be comparatively small, less than that represented by a single day of a modern war, and the resulting data would be of inestimable value. The International Hydrographic Bureau at Monaco could well sponsor such an international project when the time becomes more propitious upon the termination of the differences which have arisen among nations. With the return of cordial international relations, the nations of the earth might well consider the desirability of employing their combined navies in a hydrographic survey of this drowned continent of classic legend.'