A TRAVEL BUREAU VERSION OF MUROC DRY LAKE

Nestled in the beautiful Mojave desert about forty miles north-east of the thriving little town of Lancaster, lies a small beauty spot on the face of Mother Nature.

It is a phenomena, the like of which no mortal person has ever seen. It is a lake, yes a lake, miles and miles in length and breadth, surrounded by purple hills and the ever present sage brush and Joshua trees. In the distance lofty,majestic, snow-capped mountains lend enchantment to anyone who should pause to view the wonder and glory of this wonderful paradise.

On a bright, sunny day, this beautiful lake shimmers and glistens in all its beauty. The humble traveler, awed and subdued by the immensity of this sublime expanse of blue water in the midst of a thirsty desert, walks slowly and reverently to the very shores of this beautiful oasis.

Then a miracle happens. Upon reaching the edge of the lake, the startled and bewildered traveler discovers that instead of cool, blue water, lapping gently at its shores, there is nothing but hot, dry sand stretching as far as the eye can see. Yes, it is a mirage. A mirage than extends miles and miles and dwarfs any of the much publicised African mirages that occur on the hot, burning sands of the Sahara Desert. The breath-taking wonder of it all causes the visitor to wish with all his being that he could have had the opportunity to visit this unusual and soul-stirring scene when beautiful Lake Muroc was truly a lake.

As our traveler slowly and reluctantly leaves this spot of scenic splendor, he pauses and reflects the good fortune of those mortals who were chosen by some unseen guiding hand to dwell amidst such awe-inspiring loveliness.

A G.I. VERSION OF MUROC DRY LAKE

Situated forty long, dreary miles from the struggling little town named Lancaster lies a very nasty blemish on the puss of Old Lady Nature. Its supposed to be a lake but its a damn outrage, the like of which no person in his right mind has ever seen, or will ever want to see.

Did I say a lake? Well, on a sweltering, hot day, it sure could fool you but brother just take a stroll down to the so-called shoreline and you will see what I mean. It is the daddy of all mirages. You know what a mirage is? Its the same as dreaming of Betty Grable and than having some desert-happy sergeant roll you out of your bunk hollering "Hit the deck, youse bums, its two minutes to roll call".

Speaking of this so-called lake, it sure is miles and miles in length and breadth but as dry as W. C. Fields at a W.C.T.U. convention. Stretching as far as the eye can see and completely surrounding this freak of Nature's shore-line, is the driest, most miserable desert that the human mind can conceive. It is so dry and hot that the Joshua trees call each other Joe. They are too darn tired and thirsty to use their full names. Even the cactus gave up growing needles on their leaves, and now the Gila monsters and rattle snakes use their broad, smooth leaves for catching up on a little sack time.

As for the rolling, purple hills, they roll all right. They roll all over the lousy place, and all they are good for is a hideout for the damn coyotes which pitch woo all night long. As for the beautiful, snow-capped mountains, brother, they are nothing but a big pain in the neck to the pilots who cuss a blue streak every time they go out on a practice mission.

As for pausing and reflecting, that you do, that you do. You pause and reflect how the hell you messed up somewhere in the past, and some unseen, guiding hand (a 2nd Lt. in high air-conditioned office) got you shipped to this God-forsaken hole. If this is what they call Scenic Splendor, then the scenic

railway at Coney Island has it beat forty ways to one.

The wind is another slightly minor irritation here also. It blows so darn hard that the first Sgt. of the Termites in my barracks bellows out, "All join hands and save this lousy barracks from blowing clear over to Mojave".

By the way, that's the name of this little garden spot. The Mojave Desert. A Mojave is an Indian brave. He must have been braver and had more guts than General Patton to stay in this incinerator.

Now for the good fortune that enables you to dwell in this fugitive from a cement mixer. Fellers, I really believe that I was born under an unlucky star, smashed every mirror I looked into, walked under all the ladders in the world, and lit more three's on a match than the whole damn Army.

If I ever get out of here I solemnly promise that my new residence will be House Boat #777, San Francisco Bay, Pacific Ocean.

By: "Sandy" Cpl Brown