

Reynolds moves unit here

Technical section employs 25; \$1 million annual payroll

By Grady Phelps

BUSINESS WRITER

Reynolds Metals Co. has shifted a small but vital technical division of the aluminum giant's worldwide operations from Arkansas to the Corpus Christi area.

The move of research personnel and equipment by Reynolds comes at a time when a number of major Coastal Bend industrial, petrochemical and refining plants have been forced to reduce employee staffs.

With the Reynolds staff of 25 people comes an annual payroll of almost \$1 million.

The Alumina Division Technology Department (ADT), which has been based at Reynolds' site in Little Rock, includes three personnel with Ph.D. degrees and 16 others with graduate degrees in various technical fields of engineering or chemistry.

Dr. Yilmaz Yetmen, ADT manager, said the technology division's transfer from Arkansas means a significant impact to this area. "It's a permanent move; we are here to stay for a while," he said.

"ADT concerns itself with the efficient operation of the company's alumina plants," Yetmen said. "Its prime mission is to develop new processes and modify existing facilities to improve the quality and cost competitiveness of company products.

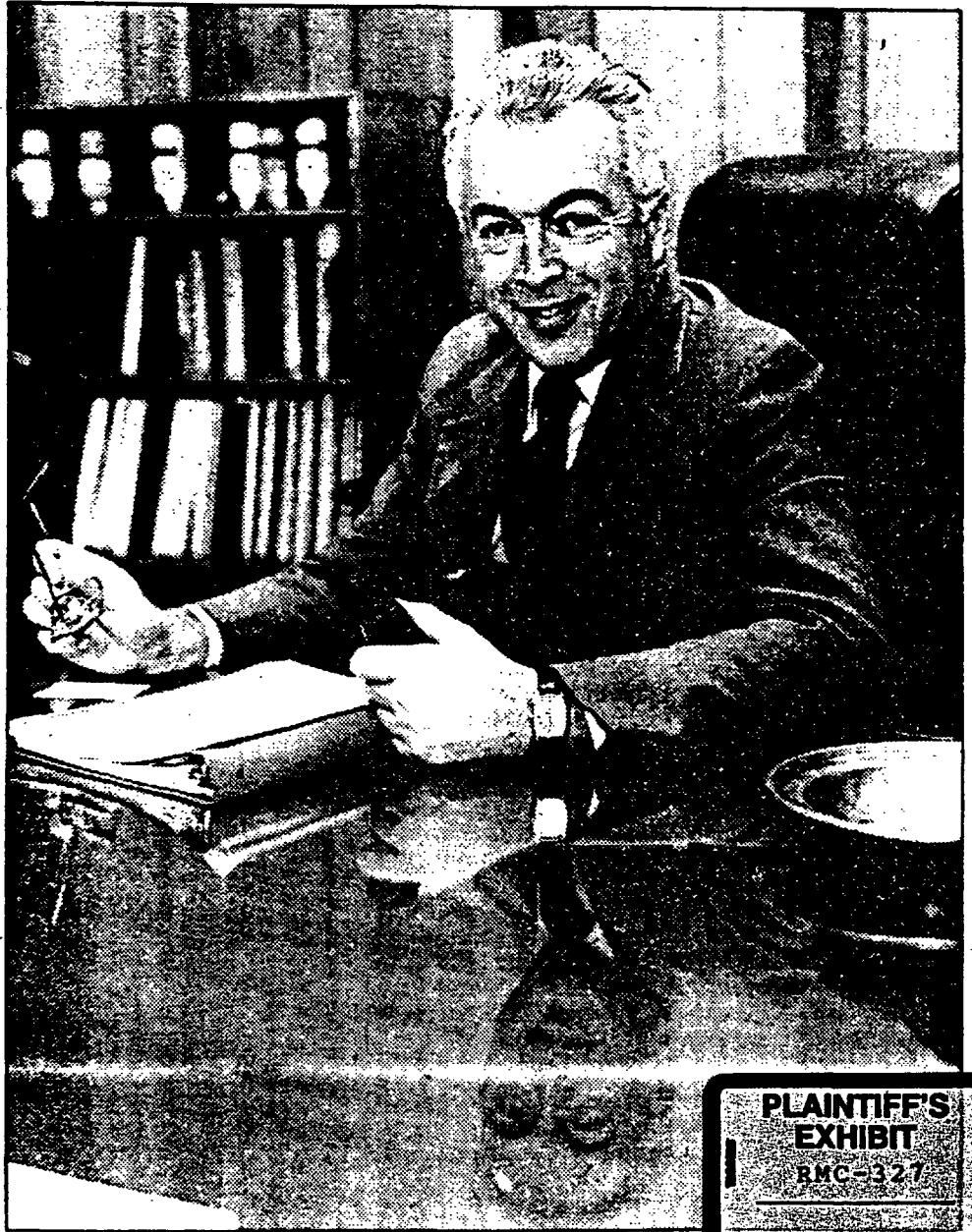
"ADT also possesses the expertise to perform technical and economic evaluations of potential capital alterations to existing facilities, and to design, engineer and build green field plants, not only for alumina production but also for related fields," he added.

Brodie Allen, executive director of the Corpus Christi Business Development Commission, said the new Reynolds division here is "a positive and important addition" to the Corpus Christi area.

"With all the negative things that have happened (layoffs and production decreases) this is great news," Allen noted. "Reynolds now joins Celanese, another worldwide company, with an R&D (research and development) center here. They are key professionals in our community."

The move of the ADT center here, coupled with Reynolds' plans to spend \$20 million to improve docking facilities, seems to indicate that Reynolds' officials have continued long-range plans for Corpus Christi operations, Allen said.

Without publicizing it, Reynolds relocated the technical personnel, computers, research laboratories, technical information library and other equipment from Little Rock into new 4,900-square-foot offices. The quarters adjoin the Reynolds Sherwin Alumina Plant administration building on the north Corpus Christi Bay shoreline near Gregory.



Dr. Yilmaz Yetmen heads new key Reynolds Metals local division

Yetmen said the ADT unit is responsible for monitoring process operations, correcting problems and improving efficiency for Reynolds' four major alumina refining plants. These include the local San Patricio County facility, totally owned by Reynolds, and others in West Germany, Australia and Jamaica, where Reynolds owns 40-to-50 percent participations.

The ADT, in operation in Arkansas since 1978, had to be moved when Reynolds' 40-year-old Hurricane Creek Alumina Plant was closed.

"We have to be close to an actual alumina plant operation to utilize our testing

capabilities," Yetmen said.

The ADT's computerization is connected to Reynolds' corporate computer system in Richmond, Va. It also has access to other industrial technical information computer data banks.

"With our personnel here, I think we could do the preliminary engineering, perform feasibility studies, design and supervise the actual construction of a new aluminum or related raw materials plant," Yetmen said.

Yetmen says the ADT unit could possibly furnish a valuable future service if

Please see Reynolds/6G

Reynolds

FROM PAGE 1G

Reynolds executives decide to re-
live the nearby idled San Patricio
Reduction Plant location. It was
permanently closed early last year.
About 450 workers lost their jobs
when metal fabrication was halted
there in May 1981 because of mar-
ket and general economic condi-
tions.

Reynolds' Sherwin Plant present-
ly uses bauxite ore mined in Aus-
tralia, South America and Guinea,
Africa, in alumina refining. Alumi-
na is the intermediate product ob-
tained by refining the raw ore
preparatory to the production of
aluminum ingots.

For many years, Reynolds used
bauxite ore feedstocks from Jamai-
ca, but sources were exhausted
there last year. The company then

diversified its bauxite sources, while
also trying to reduce costs. Alumina
refined locally is used in Reynolds
reduction plants located elsewhere.

Yetmen is presently on a four-
week, 20,000-mile trip which is tak-
ing him to visit the Strade Plant in
Germany and the \$1.2-billion Wor-
sley Plant in Australia in which
Reynolds shares an interest. The
latter plant opened early last year as
the most modern bauxite mining
and alumina facility in the world.

While Yetmen was only named
ADT manager in June, he's no
stranger to the Corpus Christi area
or the alumina technical field.

A native of Turkey, Yetmen
joined Reynolds as an engineering
development group leader at the
Sherwin Plant in 1976. In July

1977, he was selected to prepare the
initial engineering studies of the
Western Australian alumina plant.

A former lieutenant in the Turk-
ish Navy, Yetmen also served as
Reynolds' chief process engineer in
Corpus Christi and Perth, Australia.
He was technological superinten-
dent in Collic, Australia until the
completion and startup of the Wor-
sley Alumina Plant.

Yetmen holds masters and Ph.D.
degrees in chemistry from the Uni-
versity of Heidelberg. He has au-
thored numerous technical
publication papers and has a patent
pending for a chemical process ap-
plication that he developed.

As ADT manager, Yetmen re-
ports to R.H. Featherston, Reyn-
olds corporate vice president of raw

materials. Featherston was manager
of the Sherwin Plant from 1966 to
1973.

Yetmen, his wife, Sibylle, and
daughter, Canan, reside in Corpus
Christi.

Reynolds Metals employs about
900 people at the Sherwin Plant
and at its marine division, also
based here.

In a recent speech, Chairman Da-
vid P. Reynolds predicted that do-
mestic aluminum consumption will
reach a record level in 1985 with
strong demand for the lightweight
metal surpassing 16 billion pounds
for the first time.

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