

Jan. 2, 1957
**Ice Floe Rips
Hole In Hull
Of Freighter**

By **DON GUY**

MCMURDO SOUND, Antarctica
—A great ice floe, driven by near-hurricane winds, slammed the U. S. Navy freighter Arneb against the coast of Antarctica's frozen Ross Sea New Year's Day. An iceberg ripped a five-foot hole and a series of cracks in the Arneb's hull.

The powerful icebreaker Northwind crunched to the side of the stricken ship. Ice chunks bent one of the Northwind's propellers. Today, both ships were trapped in the grinding ice pack, struggling to fight free.

Capt. Nels C. Johnson of the Arneb radioed that what was trickling through the cracked seams, but pumps had the flooding under control.

The jagged hole was above the waterline on the starboard side. The Arneb's crew mustered in the holds to shift the cargo and shore up the torn sides with timbers.

The Arneb's propellor and one engine were damaged.

The Northwind—one of the Coast Guard's most powerful icebreakers able to smash through ice many feet thick—apparently did not suffer structural damage. But the pressure of the wind-driven ice was so great neither ship could maneuver.

The scene of the battle against ice and sea was near Cape Hallett at the northwest end of the Ross Sea, 500 miles north of this U.S. base. Capt. Johnson, of Alexandria, Va., sent this account by radio:

His ship was making its way toward the Knox Coast, 1,000 miles to the west, to establish a U.S. base for the International Geophysical Year.

It was buffeted by 70 m.p.h. winds.

The 100 - square - mile ice floe came down on the Arneb swiftly, from across miles of open sea.

If the Northwind can clear a path, the Arneb will try to seek shelter inside Cape Hallett to make repairs.

The Ross ice shelf is a solid chunk of ice more than 1,000 feet thick, shaped like a triangle, each side 500 miles long. Last year the Navy tanker Nespelen was trapped by shifting ice in the same fashion and lost more than 100,000 gallons of aviation gasoline before icebreakers freed it.

The Arneb, based at Davisville, R.I., is an attack cargo ship about 450 feet long, designed to carry heavy tanks and equipment into combat areas.