

RESCUE

After he had gone on about one hundred yards, R.J. realized he had not heard the other vehicle for several minutes; on checking back, he discovered what had happened. Figuring R.D.'s probable location when the slide struck him, R.J. made a brief preliminary check. This only revealed that additional help was imperative if the large slide area was to be searched thoroughly. As quickly as possible he made his way by over-snow vehicle three-quarters of a mile down the canyon to a Federal Aviation Agency maintenance shed. Since the door was nailed shut, he was forced to break in through a window. As he hoped, the shed contained a radio. After several minutes he finally made contact with the F.A.A. in Salt Lake City, and notified them of the accident and his location. Then, finding a long wooden pole, he returned to the avalanche area to probe for the missing man.

In the meantime the F.A.A. notified the near-by Bountiful Ranger Office, and by noon the rangers were organizing rescue operations. The county sheriff and jeep posse were alerted; other avalanche control work in the vicinity was halted and these rangers started to the Bountiful area. The Solitude Ski Patrol volunteered its assistance. The various groups reported to the Salt Lake Fire Control Center, fifteen miles from the Farmington area. This became a staging area for the rescue operations. Probes and other equipment were assembled.

Shortly after 1:00 the first rescuers, two F.A.A. road maintenance men, appeared at the avalanche area, unfortunately without probes. After obtaining some wooden probes, they joined in search efforts, but two of these probes quickly broke. Fifteen minutes later, three more men arrived by an over-snow vehicle, but they too had only wooden probes. Meanwhile, attempts were being made to fly Assistant Ranger R.T. into the area by helicopter from the Fire Control Center. However, high winds and lack of radio communication made it impossible for the helicopter to land in the avalanche area. Finally the pilot landed R.T. at the Farmington F.A.A. building.

By 1:30 additional personnel reached the site with snow plows and a few aluminum probes. Forty-five minutes later R.T. arrived with the remainder of the probes. R.J. explained the situation to the ranger, who organized a systematic probe of the slide, starting at R.D.'s estimated line of travel and proceeding uphill. The search was begun on the downhill portion of the slide. Several times during the probing the searchers had false indications that they had found something and stopped to investigate. At 3:30 one of the men who had been digging out a false lead moved further uphill and upstream to rest. Apparently he sat down right above R.D. The buried victim was conscious, heard the man, and shouted. The searcher alerted the others, and all frantically began to dig with their hands.

R.D. was found buried under $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet of snow in the center of the slide area. The snow vehicle was located eighty feet downhill from him. Briefly describing his four-hour ordeal to rescuers, R.D. recalled that after the