of a minute amount of hydrocarbons to the surface should produce an abnormal content of hydrocarbons in soils, and therefore forecast the location of an oil or gas reservoir underneath.

Several major inconveniences, however, make the hypothesis very difficult to apply, mainly, (1) the exact process of migration is not fully understood, (2) "geochemical noises" due to contamination, hydrocarbons being formed in the soils, *etc.*, are superimposed on migrating hydrocarbons, and (3) different soil lithologies have different powers of retention of hydrocarbons and, conversely, a different aptitude to release the hydrocarbons retained.

Gasmap introduces a method which, although following the basic theory, attempts to eliminate, solve, or bypass the problems, *i.e.*, it attempts to cope with each of the known "geochemical noises." The solution attempted in Gasmap proposes a method in which sampling and desorption of the sample are done under a definite number of principles. Its originality, however, lies basically in the method of interpretation of the results. Samples are listed according to their depths, lithology, chemical markers, and hydrocarbon contents. Through use of a computer, a statistical analysis of the Gaussian type is done and a mean value and a dispersion are derived. Samples are classified in homogeneous sets and anomalous samples are derived according to a probability threshold. Results are plotted on maps for each hydrocarbon. A composite map is produced and anomalies are classified according to their chemical composition and degree of anomaly.

FITZGERALD, J. D., and P. M. GAGNON, International Petrodata, Calgary, Alta.

USING COMPUTERIZED WELL-DATA SYSTEM

Two key ingredients are required for exploitation of geologic data bases and computers: the ability of the questioner and the quality of the library. The necessity of using a file containing reliable information is well known. However, the quality of the questions is the key to useful exploitation of this powerful tool.

The successful retrieval always consists of 3 segments—studying the geology to identify what data and maps are meaningful, retrieving the necessary data, and analyzing the results. A study was performed in the Windfall area of west-central Alberta. Three units were searched—Leduc (Upper Devonian) reefs, the Belloy (Permian) subcrop, and the upper 30 ft of the Mannville (Lower Cretaceous). A part of the retrieved area was machine mapped using only the Leduc data. A residual of a Cretaceous marker ranging 4,000–7,000 ft shallower than the reefs illustrates a pronounced drape effect over known Leduc reefs. By removing the vast amount of repetitious file pulling, correlating, and subtracting, and by allowing data to be manipulated in ways not otherwise possible, the explorationist can do what he was educated and hired to do—interpret.

FORGOTSON, JAMES M., JR., and PHILIP H. STARK, Petroleum Information Corp., Denver, Colo.

WELL-DATA FILES AND COMPUTER—EXPLORATION TOOLS FOR THE 70S

Since the development of well-data files for computer-processing began in 1963, more than 600,000 wells have been included in systems covering most of the United States and Canada. These systems contain information on ownership, location, well classification and status, drilling and completion activities, tests, depths to formation tops, core descriptions, shows, and other data. Data are obtained from the most reliable and complete source for each area and are upgraded by computer editing and the feedback of missing data and corrections from file users.

Well-data files are used at various stages of the exploration process for basin evaluation, for selection of prospective stratigraphic intervals and areas for further study, and for building peripheral files containing proprietary, technical, and economic data. A study of the Muddy Sandstone in the Powder River basin illustrates an exploration application of computer processing of a large well-data file. Prior to the discovery of Bell Creek, data from the file revealed areas in Wyoming and southeasternmost Montana with abundant hydrocarbon shows in the Muddy Sandstone. North and South Dakota and the rest of Montana had no oil shows in the Muddy Sandstone. In the area of abundant shows, geologic maps based on formation tops obtained from the file indicated trends on which subsequent drilling has discovered more than 250 million bbl of reserves. East and West Sandbar, Ute, and Whitetail fields are related to deposition around a pre-Muddy positive feature defined by Skull Creek structure and Muddy isopach residual maps. Recluse and Odekoven fields are related to a channel defined on a Muddy isopach residual map. No commercial production has been found to date in the "no show" area.

At the time of discovery of Recluse and Bell Creek, information was available within the Rocky Mountain Well History Control System to suggest areas favorable for similar types of production from the Muddy. With addition of new well control and proprietary information, the well-data file can aid in the planning of development drilling, analysis of completion practices, and reservoir evaluation. Large data files and proper application of the computer to these data will become increasingly important in the discovery of oil and gas during the 70s.

GAGLIANO, SHERWOOD M., Coastal Studies Inst., Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge, La., and NESTOR TEVES, Facultad Oceanografía, Univ. F. Villarreal, Lima, Perú

EOLIAN SAND SHEETS OF PERUVIAN COASTAL DESERT

Gemini color photographs of the Peruvian coast reveal fan-shaped patterns of eolian sand sheets emanating from small bays and extending inland 20–40 km. The sand sheets are spaced at regular intervals, and each comprises a distinct sand-distribution system with recognizable components. A 1968 field program investigated form-process relations between sand sheets and the sea-breeze phenomenon.

Most sheets are supplied by marine sand transported from source areas by along-shore currents, deposited on beaches, and blown inland in high-velocity sea-breeze zones. The winds, and consequently the transported sand, are directed and twisted by hills and valleys and in places execute turns of 120°. Locally, sands reach elevations of 2,000 m, forming giant sieflike dunes that "climb" over hilltops. In some places, sands spiral inland toward nuclear areas. Spiral centers coincide with centers of sea-breeze convection cells and form terminal points of sand transport. There dunes reach maximum development.

High-velocity sea-breeze zones are separated by lower velocity zones. In low-velocity zones, dust mantles hills, and eolian sand movement is absent. In some