
Miscellany

Helium

Users of helium for research purposes have had difficulty in obtaining gaseous helium because of its extreme scarcity, particularly when needed in college or university laboratories for research not supported under government contract or grant. Within the US Bureau of Mines, which is the free world's sole producer of helium from natural gas, helium is allocated by the Helium Liaison Office, and it is understood that that Office will give consideration to requests for helium upon the recommendation of a federal agency which has knowledge of the intended research even though it does not support the research financially.

For the information of those engaged in cryogenic research, the National Science Foundation is prepared to review applications and make recommendations to the Bureau regarding the basic research needs of individual laboratories which cannot otherwise obtain helium. It is emphasized, however, that the Foundation's assistance should not be sought until it is clearly evident that the required quantity of helium is unobtainable through normal channels. Such inquiries should be addressed to the Director, National Science Foundation, Washington 25, D. C. The following information must be included: (1) the monthly helium needs, (2) where and how the helium is to be used, and (3) the name of the supplier (if obtained through a sub-supplier, the name of the principal supplier must be given).

An article dealing with the reasons for the present shortage of helium, the current status of stop-gap measures, and the corrective steps which must be taken in the future if the limited resources of helium are to be conserved will appear in the August issue of *Physics Today*.

Killian Resigns

James R. Killian, who has served for the past year and a half as the President's special assistant for science and technology, has left Washington to take up his duties as chairman of the corporation at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His successor as chief adviser to the White House on scientific matters is George B. Kistiakowsky, professor of chemistry at Harvard University, who has been a member of the President's Scientific Advisory Committee since its creation in the latter part of 1957.

Dr. Killian was called to Washington shortly after the launching of the first Soviet satellites, at a time when the Administration was faced with the formidable

tasks of creating an effective national policy on education and of coordinating the diverse scientific and technological efforts of the many departments and agencies of the federal government. He came to the White House advisory post with the full support of the American scientific community, and it is a measure of his success that that support not only remained undiminished but if anything was enhanced during his stay in Washington.

Prof. Kistiakowsky, a physical chemist, was chairman of Harvard's Chemistry Department from 1947 to 1950 and is known for having done basic work in molecular spectroscopy, in the precise measurement of heat in chemical reactions, in photochemistry, and more recently in the kinetics of free radicals. During World War II he served as chief of the explosives division of the National Defense Research Committee, established and headed the Explosives Research Laboratory at Bruceton, Pa., and helped establish a laboratory for underwater explosives research at Woods Hole, Mass. In 1944, his knowledge of explosives brought him to the Manhattan District's Los Alamos Laboratory in New Mexico, where he headed the division concerned with designing a workable detonation system for the atomic bomb. He is a member of the American Physical Society.

Education

Three of the US Atomic Energy Commission's traveling exhibits are now on the road in connection with a new "Atoms at Work" science-teacher training program to be carried out during the summer months. With the help of funds made available by the National Science Foundation, the new program will be administered for the Commission by the Museum Division of the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies in cooperation with the National University Extension Association, and will be known as the "NUEA Science Training Program in Atomic Energy". It will center around three mobile exhibits operated by ORINS for the Commission, accompanied by specially trained personnel, and will be presented at some 50 colleges and universities in ten states. Vans carrying the exhibits will visit NSF summer institutes for science teachers, NUEA member institutions, and summer sessions of teachers' colleges. During two days on each campus, science teachers will study the exhibit and receive classroom presentations dealing with the eight major topic areas of the "Atoms at Work" mobile exhibit: man and energy, atomic fuels, fission, nuclear power program, radioisotopes, safety, international cooperation, and fusion. When not in use for classroom presentations, the exhibits will be open to the public.

The National Science Foundation has made funds available to Temple University for the purpose of inviting foreign physicists who are well informed on matters concerning science education in their home countries to visit this year's NSF Summer Institutes. Each lecturer