

PHYSICS AND GOVERNMENT

NSF appropriations slashed

While many scientists are mourning the sudden death of Mohole in a welter of dismal Capitol politics, the real news for physics concerns the other sizable NSF reduction—over \$25 million that Congress had cut out of the National Science Foundation's research and science-education programs. The \$14 billion domestic appropriations bill, containing NSF funds for fiscal 1967, was bandied back and forth between both chambers while Congress struggled over Mohole. Finally on 24 Aug. the Senate concurred with the House and Mohole was dead for this session at least.

Specifically, the cuts will force the foundation to pare its basic research budget by \$10 million, reduce its graduate science facilities budget by \$5 million (\$10 million below 1966), reduce its education programs (other than college science improvement) by \$6.5 million (\$2.5 million below 1966) and make other scattered reductions totaling \$3.8 million. NSF director Leland Haworth termed the cuts "deleterious" and said they would result in "significant and lasting adverse effects on our national programs . . . effects that would be felt by many academic institutions and by hundreds of scientists and students in all sections of the country."

200-GeV imbroglio

"A site selection should be expected by the end of September," Rep. Chet Holifield, chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, recently told Congress. An Atomic Energy Commission spokesman, however, denied this and reiterated the AEC position that the "commission hopes to be able to select a site before the end of this calendar year." Another member of the Joint Committee, Rep. Craig Hosmer, agreed with Holifield and said that the AEC "has been sitting on the list ever since it got it." Hosmer, a Republican, charged that the White House had ordered the commission to

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Tax deductible education expenses for teachers will become a reality if Congress has its way. Both Senate and House are aroused over proposed Internal Revenue Service rules to tighten educational expenses of teachers. IRS claims that Congress has never endorsed educational expenses and Rep. McVicker (D-Colo.) and Sen. Yarborough (D-Tex.) and others intend to put such wording into law.

More federal assistance to education is being proposed in Congress through two diverse pieces of legislation. In one, Rep. Brock (R-Tenn.) has taken the lead in urging that a portion of federal-income-tax money be turned over to state and local governments for their school systems. In the other Sen. Ribicoff (D-Conn.) has offered a bill that would encourage colleges and universities to obtain money from private sources by making tax free the interest on bonds sold to expand their facilities.

The Townes-Schawlow laser patent has been upheld by the US Court of Customs and Patent Appeals against claims of primacy filed by Gordon Gould (PHYSICS TODAY, Jan., p. 94). The court ruled that Gould had failed to prove either prior conception or "reasonable diligence in reducing it to practice."

"Clearly erroneous," says Sobell's lawyer of the alleged atomic-bomb sketch used as key evidence in the 1951 trial that resulted in the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and a 30-year sentence for Morton Sobell. Sobell's lawyer told PHYSICS TODAY that affidavits he had received from Philip Morrison of MIT and other scientists involved in construction of the bomb "more than support" his charge that the sketch is completely false.

Three top mainland Chinese physicists have been invited to two conferences on high-energy physics early this month at Berkeley and Stanford. With State Department blessing, conference chairmen W. K. H. Panofsky and Edwin M. McMillan extended invitations to Wen Yu-chang of the Peking Institute of Atomic Energy and Chow Kuang-chow and Ning Hu of Peking University. Thus far no word has been received from the Chinese, who have not attended an international high-energy physics conference since 1959 in Kiev.

An international physics olympics for senior secondary-school students has been proposed by the Polish Physical Society and the Polish Ministry of Education. The Poles, who have held their own national physics olympics for the past 13 years, visualize a similar contest in each participating country, followed by a worldwide physics olympics. Thus the future may have us cheering our young men in the 100-question mechanics final as well as in the 100-meter dash, with a Dyson or Feynman as coach.