function of this laboratory would be to build a large machine. Experiments in the beginning will include proton-proton and secondary-particle–proton scattering as well as production of diverse kinds of particles. But the laboratory may go off in other directions in high-energy physics, such as construction of storage rings."

Public responsibility. "It's very clear to me that, with the enormous sums of money we will receive for building the accelerator, we have special responsibilities to the Congress and the people. We will have to explain to the public why we are building this accelerator, and what they are getting in return."

Aldermaston Van de Graff Tandem May Be Shut Down

The British Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Aldermaston is considering closing down its 6-MV tandem Van de Graaff accelerator. British and US physicists told PHYSICS TODAY that owing to curtailed budgets and deëmphasis on pure research in the UK, the Aldermaston machine would probably be turned off at the close of the year, following one more period of tritium acceleration. The Aldermaston tandem, which produced one of the first and still has one of the few tritium beams in the world, was used for research both in tritium-induced and heavy-ion nuclear reactions.

Many of the research staff at Aldermaston have already left and the few remaining scientists will have the opportunity to work at Harwell just a few miles away. British physicists point out, however, that the closing down of the machine is not quite a closed book. "We shall certainly try to do something about it," said one. "I think they are closing down the wrong machine," he continued. "Scientifically it's folly to shut down a machine that has worked so well."

The fate of the Aldermaston tandem is expected to accelerate the flow of scientific manpower in nuclear physics and in pure research generally from Britain to the US. Paul Rodgers of Brookhaven National Laboratory, who visited Aldermaston last summer, said the tandem shutdown "would particularly affect the young nuclear scientists coming up. If the British are successful in generating a fairly high level of competence in their applied work, then these young people might possibly stay. Otherwise they will come either to the US or go to Heidelberg, Germany."

Too Many Meetings Declare NAS and Federal Scientists

"There are probably more international meetings than necessary for the advancement of science," says a National Academy of Sciences subcommittee on travel to international meetings. "Avoidance of duplication and careful choice of location would diminish unnecessary travel." Many government scientists, concerned over the apparently rapid increase in number of meetings, would agree the same holds true for gatherings in this country.

The NAS panel, headed by W. Albert Noyes Jr of the University of Texas, suggested adoption of several principles to guide organizations that provide travel grants for US scientists. These guidelines include (1) assurance that an applicant will make a substantive contribution to the meeting ("An invitation to present a paper is not in itself adequate indication of the probable contribution by an individual."), (2) assurance that the research potential of the individual will be enhanced by attendance at the meeting, (3) assurance that the US will be represented with quality and distinction.

Government-agency scientists also believe there is a meetings problem. One agency officer, speaking for his colleagues, told PHYSICS TODAY, "We need some sort of central planning. There are many simultaneous conferences on the same subject and too many are very close in time. Also the same people tend to show up at the meetings, whether they are held in Chicago, Copenhagen or Timbuktu."

A random sample of opinion at the New York meeting of the American Physical Society in January tended to support these observations. "If you tried to go to all the meetings in my subject," said one plasma physicist, "there would be redundancy." "Many meetings are held in inaccessible spots and at inopportune times such as holiday weekends," said an Oak Ridge sci-