

sociated with the full operation of the new four-meter telescope. With a request of \$22.2 million in FY 1976, the National Radio Astronomy Observatory can begin preliminary operations and testing of the Very Large Array toward the end of FY 1976, when the two antennas and one antenna transporter, 0.8 miles of trackage, and all central systems will be available for initial tests.

The NSF budget request also provides a 34.1% increase in support for National and Special Research Programs. These programs, totaling \$116 million in FY 1976, include major research efforts concerned with global and environmental subjects such as air-sea interactions and global weather and ocean circulation patterns. A new National Climate Dynamics Program, pulling together existing NSF programs, would be supported at \$4 million. It is aimed at improving the understanding of global-climate processes as a basis for predicting climate variations and assessing their impact.

NASA. The FY 1976 budget request

is less than 10% above that for FY 1975, although a better picture is expected for physics and astronomy programs, with an anticipated rise of about 13% (Table 4). The largest chunk, \$56.6 million, will go for hardware construction and experiments in the High Energy Astronomy Observatories program, primarily for the first mission, according to Alois Schardt, NASA physics and astronomy division head. The HEAO program is entering its peak funding period now, he told us, with launches scheduled during 1977, 1978, and 1979.

Increased funds for the Large Space Telescope are for continuing the definition phase of the program—primarily looking at preliminary design and problem areas. Last year NASA requested \$6.2 million, but Congress put a \$3 million lid on spending. With available funds, NASA is "trying to define as low-cost a system as possible and still meet the major scientific objectives," Schardt told us. Skylab data analysis has been transferred from the Office of Manned Space Flight to the Office of Space Sci-

ences, resulting in an apparent increase in funding.

—Madeleine Jacobs

New Mexico proposes a solar-energy institute

The state of New Mexico and a consortium of laboratories and universities in the state have proposed establishment of a national Solar Energy Research Institute in Albuquerque. Such an institute is possible under provisions of the Solar Energy Research, Development and Demonstration Act of 1974.

The group that delivered the proposal to the US Energy Research and Development Administration includes Sandia and Los Alamos Scientific Laboratories, the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University and the University of New Mexico. Further, information about the proposed institute is available from Don B. Shuster, Director of Advanced Planning, Sandia Laboratories, Albuquerque, N.M. 87115.

the physics community

Outstanding contributors win citations from AEC

In one of its last actions before being disbanded, the Atomic Energy Commission presented citations to seven industrial organizations and universities for outstanding contributions to US uranium-enrichment and national-security programs. The Garrett Corp and the University of Virginia, Charlottesville were cited for their contributions to gas-centrifuge technology for uranium enrichment and Goodyear Atomic Corp for operating AEC's Portsmouth, Ohio gaseous diffusion plant. Union Carbide was recognized for its work on uranium-enrichment technology in general.

The University of California's citation notes its leadership in applying nuclear technology to such national problems as energy, defense and medicine. Bendix Corp, the AEC citation says, has made outstanding contributions to using atomic energy for military purposes. Western Electric Co is cited for its "unique" willingness to undertake projects and carry them out efficiently and promptly.

ANS produces directory for media inquiries

The American Nuclear Society has compiled a *Hotline Directory for Media* that lists over 50 ANS local section scientists, engineers and communications

workers who will handle inquiries from the media regarding news stories dealing with the uses of atomic energy. Persons listed will either provide the information requested or refer reporters to more appropriate sources. ANS emphasizes that these volunteers will respond as individuals and not as representatives of the society.

The directory is supplied free of charge to the news media and affiliates; the fee to others is \$2.25. To obtain a copy contact E. Ronne, ANS, 244 East Ogden Ave, Hinsdale, Ill. 60521.

Gilmont is new chairman of scientific-society group

Ernest R. Gilmont is the 1975 chairman of the Committee of Scientific Society Presidents. He is president of the American Institute of Chemists and succeeds Alan C. Nixon, the first CSSP chairman.

The committee comprises presidents of 32 societies (including all AIP member societies except the Acoustical and the Astronomical Societies) whose combined membership is over 500 000. It serves as a forum for scientific leaders to discuss problems of concern to the American scientific community and as a means for the societies to interact with governmental agencies.

Gilmont received his PhD in organic chemistry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1956 and is

currently technical director of A. Gross & Co (Newark, N.J.) a division of the Millmaster-Onyx Corp. He has been a CSSP member since its foundation and was on the membership committee before his election as chairman.

NASA establishes an independent R&D office

An Independent Research and Development Office has been established within NASA with Ralph R. Nash as its manager. According to NASA administrator James C. Fletcher, the office will "stimulate rapid, direct dissemination of contractor IR&D information into NASA technical programs and inject NASA needs into contractor IR&D plans and programs at an early stage." The term "IR&D" is used by federal agencies in referring to self-initiated and self-funded R&D technical efforts by a company as opposed to work performed under government contract or grant.

Nash has been at NASA since 1963 and has served as executive secretary of the Research Council, Office of Aeronautics and Space Technology. He received his PhD from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1955 where he did work in physical metallurgy and solid-state physics and was a faculty member from 1948 to 1957. He has also managed several basic-research programs in the AEC.