remedy. Although the constants are not well known, the substances are widely used, and confusion in interpretation of results is a consequence.

Many of the physical and chemical properties of these substances are exceedingly interesting. For example, polonium is the only known element which has a negative coefficient of expansion with temperature. Such a property would provide a most interesting subject for investigation by persons specializing in the solid state.

Thus it is clear that many of the physical and chemical constants and properties of the naturally radioactive substances urgently require revision. This task should not be thought of as one involving mere routine measurements. Because of the unusual nature of some of these properties, the possibilities of interesting new discoveries by an alert observer are present. Further, the importance of the contribution made by someone who measures the properties accurately is constantly growing with the increased use of the substances.

In view of the great need for revised and improved constants, and also since today radioactive substances are being mined in previously unheard-of quantities, the New York Academy of Sciences has formed a Committee to stimulate work in this field. The Committee has access to considerable amounts of many differing substances, which can be made available on a gift or loan basis to investigators interested in such studies. The procedure in securing requisite amounts of substances is to outline a proposed research program, to indicate the amount of substance required, the instruments available, the personnel who expect to do the work, and to forward the proposal to the Committee. The address of the New York Academy of Sciences is 2 East 63rd Street, New York 21, N. Y. The proposal should also, if it comes from a graduate student, indicate the faculty supervision since the Committee will not approve requests unless satisfied of the critical supervision and scientific merit of the proposal. Further, assurances must be given that the recipient is qualified to handle radioactive substances and that no danger of contamination will be present. Owing to present laws, this offer is confined to U. S. citizens residing in the continental United States. The recipient will be expected to undertake publishing the results in recognized technical journals, and the New York Academy of Sciences must be furnished with copies of all reports and with rights to publish the reports at its discretion in its publications. The Academy also offers cash prizes for the best papers published in this field.

Serge A. Korff
New York University

Nuclear Data Summaries

To Appear in *Nuclear Science Abstracts*

The Nuclear Data Group of the National Bureau of Standards and the Technical Information Service of the Atomic Energy Commission are collaborating in the publication in *Nuclear Science Abstracts* (NSA) of summaries of new measurements of the following nuclear constants: half-life, radiation energy, relative isotopic abundance, nuclear moment, neutron cross section, reaction energy, and mass. Each issue of NSA, beginning with January 15, 1952, will carry such a summary of information published during the half-month period following that covered by the preceding summary. The summaries will be cumulated four times a year into large tables in which the new information for the three-month period will be arranged by element and isotope. The material is being prepared by the National Bureau of Standards group with the assistance of NSA readers.

The tabular style being used makes it possible for readers to locate quickly new values of the properties of stable and radioactive nuclei and thus to keep reference tables and compilations up-to-date with a minimum of difficulty. Because the NSA summaries will give the same kind of information as that previously published in the supplements which the Bureau of Standards group has been issuing to its 1950 compilation called *Nuclear Data*, and will make it available more promptly, the supplements have been discontinued. Initiation of revision of some sections of *Nuclear Data* is planned for 1952. *Nuclear Data*, NBS Circular 499, was issued September 1, 1950 and is available from the Government Printing Office for $4.25, which covers the large table and supplements.

International Laboratories

Progress in Planning Reported from Paris

Separate conferences to consider proposals for the establishment of an international computation laboratory and a European nuclear physics laboratory were held late last year in Paris, and it now appears likely that work on preliminary phases of both projects may soon be under way. Representatives of interested governments and agencies of the United Nations who attended the two meetings apparently were able to approach something very nearly approximating a concrete plan of action in each instance. Tentative plans have been formulated for financing the projects, good agreement has evidently been reached as to the general extent and composition of the laboratories, and in the case of the computation center, at least, a well-defined convention establishing the project has been drafted and has been submitted to the governments involved for ratification.

The conference for the establishment of the international computation center was called together on November 26th and resulted in a formal proposal that the center be situated in Rome and that it provide an international consultative and computation service for those nations participating in the project. Although at least ten nations must ratify the convention before it can enter into force, the interest thus far exhibited has been encouraging.

As now envisioned, the computation center is to be built around the Italian Institutes for the Application