Miscellany

Atoms for Peace

The United States has agreed "in principle" to a request of the Italian Government for the purchase of 10 tons of heavy water to be used in Italy's first research reactor, according to an AEC announcement made late in March. The project was among the matters discussed between representatives of the two governments during the visit to Washington of Prime Minister Scelba of Italy. Professor Francesco Giordani, chairman of the Italian Government's Committee for Nuclear Research, heads the Italian technical mission which is working out the details of the transaction with the AEC. The projected sale of heavy water to Italy is the second of its kind. The first, announced February 12th, was for the sale of 10 tons of heavy water to be delivered to India in 1955 and 1956 for use in a research reactor to be built near Bombay. Both actions are part of the support of the President's atoms for peace program.

A resolution (H. J. Res. 180) has been introduced by Sidney R. Yates, Democrat from Illinois, to provide for the construction of a nuclear power reactor in Japan. The bill, which reads in part that the city of Hiroshima "should be designated as a center for the peaceful use of atomic energy through the construction of a nuclear reactor capable of producing power for industrial purposes", has been referred to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy.

A citizen's panel to study the "present and future impact" of peaceful applications of atomic energy on industry and the economy, at home and abroad, has been established by the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy. The eight-man panel of scientists, industrialists, and civic leaders is headed by former Assistant Secretary of the Interior Robert McKinney, now editor and publisher of *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, and includes among its members John R. Dunning, dean of engineering at Columbia University, and former Atomic Energy Commissioner T. Keith Glennan, president of the Case Institute of Technology. The panel is also authorized to appraise those activities of the AEC that bear on the panel's study and to recommend to the Joint Committee "any legislative or policy actions needed to speed the proper development under both government and private auspices of peaceful uses of atomic energy".

Plans for the nation's first regional joint council of nuclear science "to speed the exchange of information among engineers and scientists" have been made in Detroit under the auspices of the local section of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Delegates of 40 engineering, professional, and scientific societies representing groups interested in the industrial applications of atomic energy and its by-products met late in February to elect a steering committee; Robert W. Hartwell, head of Detroit Edison's atomic power development project, was named chairman.

Research Facilities

Dedication of the new Glenn L. Martin Institute of Technology of the University of Maryland took place on March 25th at College Park, Md. The eight buildings of the Institute, which have been constructed during the past ten years at a cost of $8.5 million, house the entire College of Engineering, including the Institute for Fluid Dynamics and Applied Mathematics, and several departments of the College of Arts and Sciences, including the departments of physics, mathematics, and chemistry, and the new Institute of Molecular Physics. Funds for the Institute included an original gift of $2.3 million from Glenn L. Martin, pioneer aircraft manufacturer, nearly $5.7 million from the State of Maryland, and $142 946 from the Office of Naval Research and the Defense Department Bureau of Ordnance. 1300 visitors attended the dedication ceremony at which Lee A. DuBridge, president of the California Institute of Technology, was the principal speaker. An important part of the ceremony was the awarding of five honorary degrees. The two physicists who received honorary doctor of science degrees were Dr. DuBridge and J. H. Van Vleck, dean of the Division of Applied Science at Harvard University.

Harvard University has received a National Science Foundation grant of $132 000 for the construction and operation of a new radio telescope (a 60-foot parabolic antenna) to be located at the Harvard Observatory's George R. Agassiz Station at Harvard, Mass. The instrument, which is expected to be completed in about a year, will supplement the Agassiz Station's 24-foot radio telescope, also sponsored by NSF, which has been in operation since 1953. Harvard's radio astronomy program is under the joint direction of Bart J. Bok and Harold I. Ewen. The 60-foot antenna, according to Dr. Bok, will be used "to pin point more accurately the sources of radio energy and to accommodate special experimental projects not now possible because the 24-foot antenna cannot be spared from established programs". The new instrument, he said, will make it possible to investigate the fine details of spiral structure of the Milky Way system and to make studies of the so-called radio stars.

The highest laboratory in the United States is soon to be established at an altitude of 14 246 feet atop White Mountain in California, extending the present facilities of the University of California's White Mountain High-Altitude Research Station, which includes the Crooked Creek Laboratory (10 500 feet) and the Mt.

Barcroft Laboratory (12 500 feet). Present plans for the proposed summit laboratory call for the construction of a "small, rugged stone building" to house four persons at a time. Both the Crooked Creek and Mt. Barcroft Laboratories are equipped with their own power supplies and are accessible by road. During the summer the present road is to be extended to the summit laboratory site. The new laboratory will be built by the University of California with the help of a $50 000 grant from the National Science Foundation. The White Mountain Station is directed by Nello Pace of the physiology department at Berkeley and has received continuing support from three agencies: the Office of Naval Research, the National Science Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation for Medical Research.

A research reactor of the "water boiler" type is planned for construction this year at Armour Research Foundation of Illinois Institute of Technology. The reactor, intended specifically for industrial research, will be built under contract by North American Aviation, Inc., at a cost of approximately $500 000. It will be part of a new research building to be located near 34th and State streets on Chicago's south side. Designed for 50 000 watts, the reactor will be moderated and cooled with water and will employ fuel in the form of a water solution of uranyl sulphate, which will be obtained from the AEC on extended loan.

NAS Loyalty Committee

The National Academy of Sciences announced on March 28th the appointment of an Academy committee formed in response to the request of the Administration that the Academy counsel with the government on its policy with regard to relations between questions of loyalty and the awarding of government grants and contracts in support of unclassified research. Chairman of the committee is J. A. Stratton, vice president and provost of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The other members are Robert F. Bacher, chairman of the division of physics, mathematics, and astronomy, California Institute of Technology; Laird Bell, lawyer, recent chairman of the board of trustees of the University of Chicago; Wallace O. Fenn, physiologist, assistant dean, School of Medicine and Dentistry, University of Rochester; Robert F. Loeb, pathologist, director of medical service, New York Presbyterian Hospital and trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation; E. Bright Wilson, Jr., physical chemist, Harvard University; and Henry M. Wriston, educator, president of Brown University.

Resolution in Seattle

The University of Washington in Seattle, one of the largest educational institutions west of the Mississippi, is located in relative isolation at the far northwest corner of the United States. The physics department, which has almost doubled its size since the war, has been active in studies of cosmic rays and the solid state and in research using the University's 60-inch cyclotron. In recognition of its distance from other centers of activity in physics, the department has made a practice of soliciting visits from outside physicists, and during the past several years has been highly successful in attracting stimulating and professionally competent visitors. It was originally intended that one such invitation be extended to J. R. Oppenheimer, director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, for a period immediately following last summer's Seattle meeting of the American Physical Society, but in view of his other commitments during the spring and summer of 1954 the matter was not pressed. Under the acting leadership of Edwin A. Uehling in the absence of the department head, John H. Manley, who is in Zurich, Switzerland, on a Guggenheim fellowship, the physics department subsequently decided to explore the possibility of a visit by Dr. Oppenheimer during 1955. Upon discovering from him that he was to lecture at universities in Oregon in April and would be willing to come for a week in May, the department took steps to formalize his appointment to a visiting lectureship. Although the proposed appointment was endorsed by the appropriate faculty committee before being submitted to President Henry Schmitz for approval, the latter rejected the proposal and his position has been supported by the University's Board of Regents. The story reached the press in mid-February, at which time Dr. Schmitz was quoted as stating without further amplification that "bringing him [Dr. Oppenheimer] here at this time would not be in the best interests of the University". During the following weeks it was reported that several scholars had cancelled their plans to visit the University, citing the Oppenheimer incident as their reason, and that a scheduled biochemistry conference had to be called off. At a special meeting of the University's Faculty Senate in April it was announced that in a secret ballot, calling for agreement or disagreement with the decision of the University administration, the Senate had voted 56–40 to disagree with the decision. The Senate, whose members are elected from all departments and schools of the University, then voted 66–20 to adopt a resolution which regrets the damage done to the University by the President's decision, calls attention to the majority vote of the Senate disagreeing with that decision, and expresses confidence in the administration's intent to seek faculty opinion in matters of academic policy. Pointing out that a committee has been appointed to develop new procedures for considering appointments, the resolution concludes with the hope that colleagues in other institutions will again join the faculty in scholarly discussion.

On April 14th, at the annual meeting of the American Society of Biological Chemists, the seven speakers who refused to participate in the biochemical symposium at the University of Washington issued a statement declaring that "the vigor of the internal and external protest movement has had its effect. The President has wholeheartedly agreed to explore with the faculty ways