

News of Science

The U.N. and Atomic Energy

The current discussion of the establishment of an international atomic energy agency makes the following abstracts from former President Harry S. Truman's memoirs particularly interesting. In describing his effort in 1945 to get the best possible advice on atomic energy policy, Truman says of one of his cabinet meetings:

"I had asked for a memorandum from Dr. Vannevar Bush, director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, and one from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Dr. Bush said he believed a proposal to Russia for exchange of scientific information would open the door to international collaboration in the field of atomic energy and eventually to effective control, the alternative being an atomic bomb race.

"The move does not involve 'giving away the secret of the atomic bomb.'" wrote Dr. Bush: 'That secret resides principally in the details of construction of the bombs themselves, and in the manufacturing processes. What is given and what is received is scientific knowledge. Under an attempted closed system, and scientific espionage, it is probable that Russia would benefit to a considerable degree by our scientific progress, and we would benefit little by hers. Moreover, we cannot keep scientific secrets from Russia without also keeping them from the major portion of American scientists.'

"The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that the United States retain all existing secrets with respect to the atomic weapons."

A little further on Truman discusses atomic energy as follows:

"On Oct. 3 I sent to the Congress a message urging that a national policy for atomic energy be enacted into law.

"Meanwhile, the groundwork had already been laid for international discussions. I invited both Attlee and the Canadian Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, to visit Washington in November.

"Our discussions got under way on Nov. 11. . . . I told the two Prime Ministers that, so far as I could speak for the Government of the United States, I believed that a free exchange of scientific knowledge would be essential to the peace of the world.

"It was my view, I said, that the control of atomic energy for destructive purposes should be lodged in the United Nations, when we had become absolutely sure that the confidence of each nation in the good faith of the other was well founded. This, I suggested, might make it necessary to abandon the veto power in the Security Council.

"Both Attlee and MacKenzie King then gave their views, and I was pleased that they were essentially in agreement with me.

"I gave the Cabinet a detailed account of my conversations with the two Prime Ministers at the Cabinet meeting on Nov. 16 and asked for their comments. Secretary Wallace expressed some doubts about the device of a U.N. commission. Vinson and Clark, in line with the position they had taken at our earlier discussion of atomic energy, wanted to be assured that there was no intention on my part to reveal any of the 'know-how.' All agreed, however, that to refer the problem of atomic energy to the United Nations would give that organization a chance to prove itself."

Medical Education, 1954-55

■ American medical schools set all-time enrollment and graduation records in 1954-55, but they may face a student recruiting problem in the next few years, according to a report by the American Medical Association. Prepared by the AMA's Council on Medical Education and Hospitals, the 55th annual report on medical education states that 1954-55 was a year of "steady progress" in various phases of medical education.

An enrollment problem may result because the number of applications to medical schools has been decreasing for the past 5 years. However, the decrease this year was smaller, and it is hoped that a plateau has been reached. In the meantime, some schools may have difficulty in filling all available openings with qualified students.

Only 16.8 percent of the entering class in 1954-55 had an "A" college record, while 69 percent had "B," and 14.2 percent had "C." There were 6977 physicians graduated last year from 75 approved 4-year medical schools. This is

the sixth consecutive year that a graduation record has been set.

Next year's class probably will be slightly smaller. However, the report said any decrease will be "only an incident" in a continually expanding number of graduates in years ahead, since classes scheduled for graduation in subsequent years are somewhat larger than next year's. Seven more schools will be graduating physicians by 1960.

Four are new schools just opened or in various stages of development: Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University, New York; the University of Miami Medical School, Coral Gables, Fla.; Seton Hall College of Medicine, Jersey City, N.J.; and the University of Florida School of Medicine, Gainesville, Fla. The other three are 2-year basic medical science schools that are expanding their programs to 4 years: the University of Mississippi School of Medicine, Jackson, Miss.; the University of Missouri School of Medicine, Columbia, Mo.; and the West Virginia University School of Medicine, Morgantown, W. Va.

Eighty-two percent of the first-year class in 1954-55 will be liable for military service on completion of medical school and internship training. Seventy-three percent of the class graduated in June 1955 was liable for such service. Total enrollment in American medical schools during 1954-55 was 28,585, an increase of 356 over the preceding year. Approximately two-thirds of the increase is accounted for by the addition of the University of California School of Medicine, Los Angeles, to the approved list.

The entering class of 7576 students was the largest ever enrolled in the nation's medical schools. This was an increase of 127 over the preceding year. Half of the increase in the entering class was accounted for by the addition of a first-year class at the newly approved California school.

The report also said that projected 1955-56 budgets show there has been a "modest improvement" in medical school financing. Approximately 95 percent of the support for research now conducted in medical schools is made possible by grants-in-aid from outside agencies.

Estimates for 1955-56 indicate that outside agencies will give about \$54.5 million to medical schools for the support of research activities and slightly more than \$7 million for special teaching programs. This is in addition to the estimated \$98 million from tuition, endowment income, legislative appropriation, gifts, and grants that support the basic teaching programs.

More than \$2 million was given to medical schools during 1954 by the National Funds for Medical Education. This fund is supported by business and