

News of Science

IAEA First-Year Program

The Preparatory Commission of the International Atomic Energy Agency recently released a report proposing a program for the first year of IAEA's operation. The report will be considered at the first general conference of the agency, which will open in Vienna on 1 Oct. In addition to the report of the Preparatory Commission, the conference will consider a variety of other recommendations made by the commission concerning the relationship of the agency to the United Nations and to other international organizations, the headquarters of the agency, and a number of recommendations concerning structure and administration.

The basic objective of the agency as defined in its statute is to "seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world." The Preparatory Commission's report recognizes that one of the first ways in which the agency can attempt to meet this objective is by assisting its members "to acquire the knowledge and skills to make full use of the applications of radiation and radioisotopes for scientific research, and to . . . agriculture, industry, and medicine."

The commission recommends that the agency take early action to stimulate the flow of scientific and technical information among its members. While welcoming the removal of classification restrictions during the last year or two, the commission considers that the agency can offer a unique service by providing a central pool of information and by keeping its members informed of the latest developments in the nuclear field.

The commission emphasizes that from its inception the agency "will be faced with problems created by the world-wide shortage of trained scientific and technical personnel." It recommends, therefore, that the agency take immediate steps to assist the training of nuclear specialists, particularly in the underdeveloped countries, and expresses the hope that member states will from the outset place at the disposal of the agency training and research facilities, particu-

larly where reactors already exist. The commission suggests the establishment of a special program for promoting the construction of a limited number of research or power reactors, so located as to give "the maximum benefit to the largest possible number of member states."

The report recommends that the budget for the first year of the agency be \$4,089,000 and that a working capital fund of \$2 million be established. In addition, it is proposed that states that are members of the agency make voluntary contributions totaling \$250,000 for the establishment of training programs for nuclear specialists, particularly in the less-developed countries.

SEATO Fellowships

Research fellowships for nationals of member countries are now being offered by the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization under its cultural relations program. The grants, for research primarily in SEATO countries, seek to encourage study of "such social, economic, political, cultural, scientific and educational problems as give insight into the present needs and future development of Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific."

The grants are for from 4 to 10 months and provide a \$400 monthly allowance and air transportation. Announcement of the final awards, which are to be made by an international SEATO committee, is expected in December. U.S. citizens should apply *not later than 15 Oct. 1957* to the Committee on International Exchange of Persons, Conference Board of Associated Research Councils, 2101 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C.

Submarine Mountain Range

A new undersea mountain range has been discovered north of Point Barrow, Alaska, by a team of geophysicists from Columbia University's Lamont Geological Observatory. The group, which is engaged in research for the International Geophysical Year, is stationed on an

Arctic ice pack that is drifting toward the North Pole. The work is sponsored by the IGY Committee of the National Academy of Sciences and the Air Force Cambridge Research Center.

Maurice J. Davidson, leader of the expedition, has radioed that there is every indication that this major submarine range parallels the great Lomonosov ridge in the central Arctic. This latter ridge extends from Greenland across the Arctic Ocean toward the New Siberian Islands and has been explored by Soviet scientists and by American scientists on T-3, the floating ice island.

The geophysicists have reported that since first soundings were taken at 82°15'N and 165°10'W all results had indicated water depths of about 3000 meters, or nearly 10,000 feet. Recently, however, the station, which has been moving steadily, floated over a "topographic feature" with depths as shallow as 1515 meters, or 4971 feet, at 83°51.5'N and 168°43'W. This indicates a submarine mountain range that rises at least 5000 feet above the ocean floor. It was not possible for the investigators to obtain further details on the length or width of the range.

The geophysicists also reported that several cores of ocean-bottom sediments have been obtained by the expedition. One of these cores is perhaps the longest ever obtained in the Arctic Ocean. They will be brought back to the Lamont Geological Observatory for analysis.

High-School Science Enrollments Rise for First Time since 1910

The U.S. Office of Education reports that a recent study of high-school enrollments in science and mathematics, to be published in full in a few months, shows that last fall there was a small increase in the percentage of students enrolled in mathematics and science courses. This is the first such increase since 1910. Until last fall, the percentages had been generally on the decline. However, despite the previous percentage declines, the total number of students enrolled in these courses has increased steadily and is now the highest in the nation's history.

The Office of Education also reports that more and more schools have been offering courses in science and mathematics. The percentage of public high schools providing courses in chemistry or physics to 12th-grade students rose from 77 percent in 1954 to 82 percent last year. Schools offering plane geometry courses to 10th-grade students rose from 78 percent to 81 percent.

The study showed that the percentage of high-school students taking algebra