

check the more hasty and unconsidered impulses of popular feeling, to train the democracy to the habit of looking before and after."

The Board of Advisers of the Academic Freedom Fund will be: Bentley Glass of Johns Hopkins University, Robert K. Carr of Dartmouth College, Ralph F. Fuchs of Indiana University, and Edward L. Hutton and S. Jay Levy of New York City.

Thermophysical Properties Research Center

The Thermophysical Properties Research Center at Purdue University was started in January 1957 with the ultimate goal of becoming a world center for the collection, analysis, correlation, and dissemination of thermophysical properties information and of providing facilities for research to fill in the gaps in the world knowledge of these properties. The center is under the direction of its originator, Y. S. Touloukian, a member of the staff of the School of Mechanical Engineering. It is housed in a small two-story building that stands between the School of Mechanical Engineering, which administers it, and the Statistical Laboratory, without whose digital computer, magnetic tapes, and other data-processing equipment the organization could not function, for it is essentially a mechanized operation. For example a machine method of abstracting scientific articles should soon be in use. The machine scans a printed page and selects and prints only the sentences relating to a specific subject, thus producing an abstract in the author's own words.

The staff of the center consists of seven scientists drawn from the schools of mechanical engineering, chemical and metallurgical engineering, chemistry, and physics. The initial financial needs of the center have been met by some 20 industrial organizations known as founder sponsors, each of which has agreed to make an annual contribution for 3 years.

The number of founder sponsors will be increased by at least 50 percent before the end of this year. Firms may join the group of founder sponsors up until the end of the first 3-year period, which expires 31 December 1959, after which no more will be accepted.

The center's operation is conceived as a continuous program to serve economically all needs in the field of thermophysical properties information, in contrast to a series of costly "crash programs" on individual problems. Therefore, the objective has been to receive small contributions from many firms—the minimum for a founding sponsor

being \$2500 per year and the average for all founding sponsors thus far being \$3500.

A scheme to classify all matter has been designed, a task that required 1 year and 2 months. The scheme was taken out to experts in the field to be broken down if possible. It stood up. Since the information is vast, a system of coding had to be devised for its mechanization. This also was accomplished in the first year and a half of the center's operation.

During this year and a half, the center has also been able to collect information and conduct research. Some 21,000 items of information have been collected and processed. This has all been accomplished on an operating budget of only \$75,000 per year. The center now plans to raise its operating budget to \$225,000 a year, increase its personnel, and undertake to serve the total needs of industry, the colleges, the Army, Navy, and Air Force for information on all thermophysical properties of matter.

The center proposes to issue each year a 1000-page *Bibliography on Thermophysical Properties*, the first volume to appear about 1 January 1959. The center also proposes to publish "Most Probable Values of Properties," a set of tables. Touloukian sees the center's responsibility as about equally divided between mechanized search of the literature and the supervision of new experimental research.

Hearings on Soil and Water Research Facilities

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced the locations and dates of public hearings to be held in connection with a study of needs for soil and water conservation research facilities. The study is being made at the request of the Senate Committee on Agricultural Appropriations.

Hearings have been scheduled as follows: 14 October, Rapid City, S.D.; 15 October, Salt Lake City, Utah; 16 October, Boise, Idaho; 24 October, Charleston, S.C.; 28 October, Sacramento, Calif.; 30 October, Phoenix, Ariz.; 31 October, Amarillo, Tex.; 6 November, Harrisburg, Pa.; 7 November, Boston, Mass.; 14 November, Washington, D.C.; 17 November, Des Moines, Iowa; 18 November, Fort Wayne, Ind.; 19 November, Nashville, Tenn.; 20 November, New Orleans, La.

Farmers, ranchers, farm organizations, and lay groups interested in soil and water research are invited to present their recommendations at the hearings. Formal channels have been established

for federal agencies, state agricultural experiment stations, and state extension services to submit their recommendations direct to the working group. Members of the group are: G. M. Browning of Iowa State College, Ames, representing the state agricultural experiment stations; Gerald E. Ryerson of the Soil Conservation Service, Washington, D.C.; and Cecil H. Wadleigh and Darnell M. Whitt of the Agricultural Research Service, Beltsville, Md.

When the working group was appointed on 29 July, it was directed to focus its attention on problems of national and regional importance, leaving for the attention of the states problems having only state or local significance. The group will consider research needs in watershed engineering, erosion control, water management, soil management, and basic soil problems.

News Briefs

The Atomic Energy Commission has announced that it proposes to license two New England firms to collect low-level radioactive wastes and to dispose of them at sea. The licenses would be in effect through 31 August 1960. The Walker Trucking Company of New Britain, Conn., will be licensed to dispose of waste byproduct material (radioisotopes) and waste source material (uranium and thorium). The New England Tank Cleaning Company of Cambridge, Mass., will be licensed to dispose of byproduct material (radioisotopes). Each firm will be authorized to collect pre-packaged and labeled waste materials and to dispose of the materials in the Atlantic Ocean in containers made heavy enough to insure sinking to at least 1000 fathoms.

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Clifford F. Rassweiler said recently in his presidential address to the American Chemical Society that the nation needs a fourth military service devoted entirely to research and development. He said the new force ought to be made equal in stature to the Army, Navy, and Air Force and should have its own representatives on the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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Metropolitan Life Insurance Company statisticians, who have been charting the poliomyelitis experience of the company's industrial policyholders, report that not a single death from the disease occurred in the insured group during the first 6 months of the year, but that there were three deaths in July. Only 2220 cases of poliomyelitis were reported for the whole population of the country in the 35 weeks ending 30