

each country hold a meeting to reach agreement regarding the final plan for the Year for that particular country. He pointed out that the Year has two elements: an international cooperative element and the individual programs of the various nations.

With regard to a possible national plan for this country, Hundley made several specific suggestions that fell into three classes: research projects of special importance to the United States, research on problems as important to other countries as to the United States, and research that would be of benefit almost entirely to other countries.

Albert W. Dent was the final panelist to speak. He stressed the importance of citizen participation in the programs selected and the need to evolve better techniques in educating and motivating people to participate in health programs, such as in the program of vaccination against poliomyelitis and that of tuberculosis control. He pointed out that public apathy has developed with regard to both of these diseases.

Plan Being Considered by WHO

In the general discussion that followed the panelists' presentations, H. van Zile Hyde of the U.S. Public Health Service, and U.S. member of the WHO executive board, outlined briefly what the director of the World Health Organization is proposing with respect to the International Health Year at the current World Health Assembly in Geneva. The object of the Health Year, as presented by the director general's report, is "to stimulate, primarily on a national basis, the intensification of international cooperation in

carefully selected aspects of health and of medical research." This will involve the intensification of field activities in the control or eradication of specific diseases and the intensification of research related to WHO's growing program. Examples of field activity mentioned by the director general include renewed emphasis on malaria and smallpox eradication and installation of piped water supplies. As examples of fields for increased research, he cited cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and virus diseases. The director general further suggested that national committees be formed throughout the world to stimulate interest in and to plan for the IHY.

The Washington forum carried this idea further by proposing that as a framework for the International Health Year a series of national assemblies be held, dealing with health problems in the respective countries, and that the year might close with a climatic congress held in connection with the World Health Assembly in the spring of 1963. The forum session ended with unanimous passage of a resolution that read: "Forum No. 2 recommends urging the U.S. Delegation to the Twelfth World Health Assembly to support in the Assembly the designation of an International Health Year, to start in 1961, and further recommends that the National Citizens Committee for the World Health Organization, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Congress, and other groups give all possible support to the project."

Under last September's U.N. resolution, WHO has been invited to report on the International Health Year to the

U.N.'s Economic and Social Council at its 28th session this July, and to the General Assembly at its 14th session, which will begin in September.

In the United States, Congressional sources confidently predict that adequate funds will be provided for the IHY once the appropriate scientific authorities, governmental and nongovernmental, have developed specific programs for the Year. As in the case of the International Geophysical Year, bodies such as the National Academy of Sciences, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare are being asked to draft the framework for the International Health Year program that will eventually be submitted to Congress for consideration.

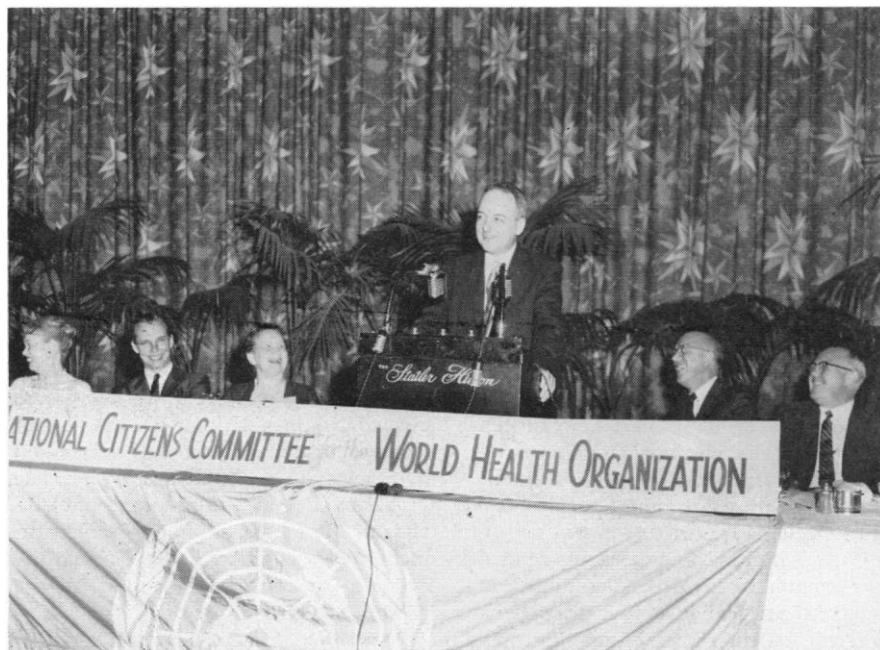
Reports Disagree on Radiation Hazards

The issue of radiation dangers continues to stir wide controversy among Congressmen, scientists, and journalists in Washington. A flurry of reports, often contradictory in their conclusions, is behind the current flare-up of the radiation issue that first received public attention during the 1956 presidential campaign.

Publication last month of a report by the National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurement started the controversy. This report made substantial downward revisions in the committee's previous estimates of the dangers posed by strontium-90. Another report, issued by an international group, made a contrary recommendation and suggested that the current "permissibility" limits be lowered. This conflict caused repercussions all over Washington. The Joint Atomic Energy Committee set up hearings on the issue which were designed to be the most thorough yet. Columnists and newsletter publishers vied with one another to get the international report, which had been published in England, but which was not available here. A Washington science writer, criticized for one of his stories on the issue, defended himself before the Congress. The controversy even reached the confirmation hearings of former AEC chairman Strauss. One commentator suggestively pointed to the fact that the National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurement has four members who are AEC employees.

United States Report

In its report, the National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurement doubled its estimate of the amount of strontium-90 that could be allowed to accumulate in the human body without



Secretary Arthur S. Flemming addresses the National Conference on World Health.

causing an "unacceptable" hazard. It also increased by one-quarter the maximum permissible concentrations of the radioactive material in water, food, and milk.

The committee, the nation's highest advisory group on radiation protection, made its recommendations in the new issue of *Standards for Protection Against Radiation*, which was published last month. The new handbook is the result of 5 years of work by a subgroup of the national committee headed by K. Z. Morgan of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. It is designed primarily to establish the amounts of radioactive materials that may be permitted to enter the bodies of workers at atomic energy installations and of persons living near such sites.

International Report

The organization which issued the conflicting report is the International Commission on Radiological Protection. This group, which was founded in 1928, has 13 members from seven countries. The chairman is R. M. Sievert of Sweden. The U.S. representative is Lauriston S. Taylor, who is also chairman of the National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurement. In its recommendations, which were formulated 9 September 1958 but only recently released, the commission advised a further lowering of the "permissible" limits of radiation. If the international group's standards were adopted in this country, the current permissibility limits for industrial workers would be reduced to as low as one-tenth their present level. The estimated tolerable level of radiation from fallout would also be reduced, by about one-third. The basic criterion behind these standards and those of the national group is the amount of radiation the human body can receive without causing an "unacceptable" hazard.

Discrepancy Cited by Critics

Immediately after the international report became available, criticism of the national report began to mount. The discrepancy between the two reports was cited in conjunction with the suggested possibility that the United States, with its heavy investment in atomic energy, was presenting a misleading view of the dangers involved. Adding to the confusion were other reports which have appeared since publication of the U.S. committee's report. One that received wide comment was that of the General Advisory Committee of the Atomic Energy Commission. In general, this report lauded the commission for its work to date and stated that all "significant" data on radiation hazards had been made available to the public. It also

gave a brief review of recent developments and an evaluation of radiation dangers. This report was criticized almost immediately by individuals outside the AEC. Many commentators pointed to the fact that there were no scientists trained as geneticists on the advisory committee. Thus, the question of possible genetic hazards over the years as opposed to physiological dangers in the present and in the near future remains unanswered. Criticism of the report reached a peak when Ralph Lapp, physicist and writer, described it as "shocking" and called for a presidential committee of inquiry to examine it.

Congressional Action

In the Congress, the special subcommittee on radiation of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee held 4-day hearings on the dangers from fallout. Testimony given before the subgroup tended to support the view that radiation dangers have been inadequately assessed. Witnesses said that, as a result of atomic weapon tests last fall, there is a record amount of radioactive debris in the stratosphere. This debris, they stated, can be expected to fall very rapidly and, because of the structure of the atmosphere, to fall principally on the Northern Hemisphere. As a result, the committee was told, radioactive fallout can be expected to double in the next few years. These reports drew expressions of concern from the subcommittee chairman, Chet Holifield (D-Cal.). He pointed to the fact that the amount of radioactive debris being created was far in excess of a safety limit of 10,000 kilotons annually, which was recommended by scientists during the subcommittee's fallout hearings in 1957.

Eisenhower Speech Highlights Basic Research Symposium

A 3-day symposium on basic research drew more than 225 of the nation's top scientists, educators, and industrialists to New York's Rockefeller Institute on 14-16 May. Although no summary or list of resolutions was issued at the end of the meeting, there was general agreement on a number of points. One was that basic scientific research is part of the general scholastic effort of the country and that any actions or attitudes that advance that general effort help further basic research. The need for means of support for research in addition to the individual project grant was also frequently cited by speakers and panelists. A third point on which there was general agreement concerned the desirability of having the research worker teach and the teacher do research for short periods during their careers.

The meeting, held under the joint auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, the AAAS, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, provided a forum at which the conferees set forth and examined the facts concerning the support of basic scientific research in the United States. Governmental support was one of the main topics before the symposium, and the major news event of the meeting was President Eisenhower's announcement, at a dinner for the scientists, that he would ask Congress for \$100 million for a new linear high-energy accelerator. The device, to be built at Stanford University in California, will be 50 times longer than the largest accelerator of its kind known to be in operation today.

Papers and Discussions

A total of 12 basic papers were read at the symposium, which was held under the great blue hemisphere of the institute's Caspary Hall. Robert Oppenheimer spoke first, on the "Importance of New Knowledge." He was followed by Alan T. Waterman of the National Science Foundation and William O. Baker of Bell Telephone Laboratories, who spoke, respectively, on "Basic Research in the United States" and the "Paradox of Choice"—an examination of management's role relative to an industrial laboratory's research. A discussion period followed these three presentations. Questions from the audience were answered by the speakers, who were joined by three or four other panelists. This practice was followed in each of the other three sessions, at each of which three papers were given. These sessions were concerned with basic research in various types of educational institutions, with basic research in various types of laboratories, and with financial support of basic research by government, industry, and private philanthropic organizations.

Eisenhower's Speech

The scientists attending the conference were joined by about an equal number of representatives from industry, from the fields of publishing and education, and from other professions for a dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria. Detlev W. Bronk, of the National Academy of Sciences and the Rockefeller Institute, acted as host during the dinner and introduced the speakers. Brief talks were given by James Killian of the Federal Council for Science and Technology and by Crawford Greenwalt of Dupont. The President then spoke, offering a brief review of the relationship between government and science, and announcing the proposal for the accelerator.

The papers and précis of the discussions at the New York meeting will be published by the AAAS, probably in the