

have charge of radiological health activities, including the collecting, analyzing, and interpreting of data on environmental radiation levels. The controversy became a sharp public issue in March when the National Advisory Committee on Radiation, headed by Russell H. Morgan of Johns Hopkins University, held that it was unwise for a single agency—the Atomic Energy Commission—to be responsible both for promoting the uses of atomic energy and for regulating against health hazards. Morgan's report proposed that central control authority over radiation hazards be placed in the Public Health Service. This recommendation was incorporated in a bill introduced in April by Senator Lister Hill (D-Ala.). The proposed legislation (S. 1228), still pending, is called the "Radiation Hazards Act of 1959."

The legislation that has just been enacted does not substantially alter the roles of the AEC and HEW in the area of radiation health control, although, through its membership in the President's Radiation Council, HEW will now play an active part in the formulation of standards and policies and in the coordination of responsibilities at the federal and state levels. Further, the President has issued a directive that HEW, in order to advise him and the general public, should "intensify" its radiological health effort and have "primary responsibility" within the executive branch for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data on environmental radiation levels, such as fallout.

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's current appropriation for radiological work is \$3.2 million compared to \$1 million for fiscal 1959. The biggest increase in funds is in the Public Health Service's division of radiological health, which will receive \$2.5 million for fiscal 1960, compared to \$634,000 for fiscal 1959.

In the Senate debate before Anderson's bill was passed, Senator Hubert Humphrey asked whether the new measure in any way lessened the need for the legislation described in Senator Hill's bill. Senator Anderson replied that his proposal had been redrafted to make sure that it applied only to "materials now regulated by the AEC." He emphasized that it was not intended "to prejudice in any way Senator Hill's bill." He added that if at a later date the Congress should decide to "enact the policies or provisions of Senator Hill's bill, that would be within the power of the Congress at that time."

Because of the Administration's efforts to resolve the radiological health questions, Senator Hill has not pressed for action on his bill. However throughout the discussion of the issue it has seemed to some observers that the Atomic Energy Commission has protested publicly that it does not oppose a transfer of authority, yet, as one spokesman put it, seems to be "jealously trying to hang on to control authority." It will be interesting to see to what extent the new National Radiation Council can influence the situation.

Senate Committee Seeks Views on Water Resource Problems

A new governmental group, the Senate Select Committee on National Water Resources, will work in the field this fall and winter to determine the public's views on a wide range of water problems. Hearings at 19 points throughout the country are scheduled between 7 October and 8 December.

The 17-man committee was created earlier this year to study prospective national water needs for the periods 1959-1980 and 1959-2000. Water for domestic uses, agriculture, industry, power generation, flood control, recreation, and so forth, will be considered. Attention also will be given to increasing the usefulness of available water resources through weather modification, evaporation reduction, conversion of salt water, pollution abatement, and application of nuclear energy.

Conservation agencies and groups are expected to testify on such problems as pollution abatement, wet-land drainage, and protection of stream fisheries. The committee also may work on developing a formula for deciding how much water is needed for federal fish and wildlife projects in comparison with the needs for irrigation, power generation, and other uses.

Federal agencies concerned with water resources have already been asked to prepare reports. The committee is to transmit results of the study to the Senate, with recommendations, by 31 January 1961. Initial funds for the work amount to \$175,000. Senator Robert S. Kerr (Okla.) is chairman of the select committee, and Senator Thomas H. Kuchel (Calif.) is vice chairman. Persons wishing to testify are invited to communicate with the staff director, Theodore Schad, at Room 3206, New Senate Office Building, First and C Sts., NE, Washington 25, D.C.

Mental Health Committee Formed to Advise PHS

Surgeon General Leroy E. Burney has announced the appointment of an *ad hoc* committee to develop a basis for improved planning of mental health facilities throughout the nation. The committee is composed of ten state health officials and two representatives of the Public Health Service. The group will work with PHS in formulating treatment and administrative guidelines which could be used in developing statewide plans for mental health facilities.

In the past, emphasis has been placed on providing large institutions for the care of the mentally ill. Services now being developed include outpatient and emergency service through hospital clinics or mental health centers, increased use of general hospitals for the treatment of psychiatric patients, "half-way houses," and nursing homes. The committee will hold its first meeting in Washington on 12-13 October.

Education Act Graduate Fellowships Awarded

United States Commissioner of Education Lawrence G. Derthick has announced that 997 graduate students have been awarded fellowships under terms of Title IV of the National Defense Education Act, designed to increase the number of college and university teachers. The fellowships are set up in 272 new or expanded graduate programs in 123 institutions of higher education. The programs were selected from among 1038 programs proposed by 168 colleges and universities. Selection of fellows was based on recommendations to the commissioner by the 272 graduate schools whose proposals were approved.

Each fellow will receive \$2000 in the first year, \$2000 in the second year, and \$2400 in the third year, together with an allowance of \$400 per year for each dependent. The institution will receive up to \$2500 per year per fellow. Total cost of the program during the first year is \$5,294,000.

Radiation Protection Measures Agreed on by OEEC Countries

The 17 countries of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation have agreed on common measures for safeguarding their populations from the dangers of nuclear radiation. This sum-

mer the OEEC Council adopted a decision requiring member countries to ensure adequate health protection for all persons who might be exposed, whether occupationally or otherwise, to ionizing radiations. Appropriate measures must also be taken in connection with emergencies or accidents involving such radiations. Finally, all countries are called upon to report to the European Nuclear Energy Agency, by 15 November, on the legal and administrative measures that they have taken in this field, so that ENEA can make a comprehensive survey by the end of the year.

The council further recommended that the health protection measures called for should be based on common norms that have been developed by an international group, established by ENEA in May 1958, under the chairmanship of Mogens Faber of Denmark. Collaboration within this group between leading radiation experts in the OEEC countries and Euratom has made it possible to recommend uniform measures for all European countries. These norms, in turn, are based on the recently revised recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection.

Flemming Names Makers of Fraudulent Reducing Devices

At a recent press conference Arthur S. Flemming, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, listed by name and maker 27 products and devices that he said had been "foisted on the public as weight reducers." All the products named had been the subject of court cases in which the Food and Drug Administration had forced a change in labeling to eliminate false claims, or had seized and destroyed the items, or had ruled them off the market.

Flemming pointed out that the American Medical Association has estimated that the public is spending \$100 million a year on fraudulent weight reducers. He then commented that the recent rise in appropriations for the Food and Drug Administration would increase the inspection staff from 400 to 500 inspectors. However, Flemming also emphasized that the federal government has no authority to proceed against the salon type of reducing devices because they are not in interstate commerce. Vibrator devices were the most numerous among the spurious weight reducers.

Giant Telescopes

The Navy has revealed the dimensions and other details of the radio telescope it is building in Sugar Grove, W. Va. In size and complexity, the telescope will dwarf anything of its kind yet constructed. Its reflecting mirror will be 600 feet in diameter. The largest radio telescope now in operation, at Jodrell Bank in England, has a reflector 250 feet in diameter. The Soviet Union is reported to be planning construction of one with a 350-foot reflector.

Theoretically, it was announced, the Navy radio telescope should be able to penetrate space to a distance of 38 billion light years—19 times farther than the range of the 200-inch optical telescope at Mt. Palomar, Calif., the world's largest.

In another development, a 140-foot radio telescope is now under construction on a 10,000-acre site chosen for the National Radio Observatory at Green Bank, W. Va., 30-miles from the Navy facility. The telescope, which will be 205 feet high, is expected to be in operation in the fall of 1960. The reflector, made of aluminum plates $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, has an area equivalent to three-eighths of an acre. With its supporting structure, it weighs about 350 tons.



George P. Larrick, Food and Drug Administration head, shows Arthur S. Flemming, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, a "magic disc vibrator" during a press conference on weight reduction quackery.

Dow Corning Research Center

The Dow Corning Corporation, Midland, Mich., has announced the founding of the Dow Corning Center for Aid to Medical Research. The purpose of the center is to serve the medical profession on a nonprofit basis by (i) providing technical aid in the use of silicones in medicine and surgery; (ii) acting as a clearing house for information about medical uses of silicones; and (iii) cooperating in research in organosilicon chemistry in relation to the human body.

For the past 10 years Dow Corning scientists have been cooperating with physicians and surgeons in finding ways to use silicones in medical research. Recent successes in several areas have accelerated this activity. The corporation has established the center to make available its advisory services without charge, and on a more formal and efficient basis. The new unit is separate from Dow Corning's commercial activities but is allied with its research department. Rob Roy McGregor, assistant research director for Dow Corning since 1955, is the center's director; Silas A. Braley is executive secretary.