

Administration: "We are no further behind them than we were yesterday. But that's far enough." Glennan cited the propulsion problem as the main source of this country's difficulties, suggesting that "in the opinion of our scientists, we lack only the propulsion capacity to match their spectacular feats."

Work on this problem is currently under way among the U.S. agencies concerned with space. Two rockets, the Vega and the Centaur, are now under development and are expected to match the thrust of the rockets currently in use in the Soviet Union. They are expected to be ready in about a year. Two other rockets, the Nova and the Saturn, are being developed for use in the 1960's. These are being designed to have the 1.5-million-pound thrust that is held to be necessary for extra-terrestrial contacts. In recent weeks, however, there has been discussion about curtailing the Saturn program for lack of funds.

Economy Delays Program

Although no responsible official has stated that more spending alone is the answer to this country's difficulties in the space competition, there is no question that uncertain financing and periodic budget cuts have delayed the programs that promise to provide boosters of the capacity needed. The possibility of curtailment or cancellation of the Saturn program is only one example. During its last session, Congress made a significant reduction of the funds that the President had requested for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The House of Representatives had made a cut of \$60 million in NASA's budget. The Senate recommended the full amount of \$350 million. In accordance with the usual practice in Congress, the difference was split, and the space agency lost \$30 million. At the time of the House cut, the NASA administrator said that action would have "crippling" and "disastrous" consequences with regard to space competition. During the period when Congress was acting on the NASA request, there was a lull in Soviet space activities and the cut was the subject of little debate and little publicity. Recent events, including the launching of Lunik II, which hit the moon, and of Lunik III, can be expected to make the issue of economy in space activities a lively one in the political campaigns ahead.

Call for Space Forum Planned by Soviets

The Soviet Union plans to ask the United Nations to convene an international scientific conference on space research. The call for the conference was made last week by Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily V. Kuznetsov in a speech before the U.N. General Assembly. Reports indicate that the Soviet Union will propose that the meeting be held next year and that it be modeled on the scientific conferences on the peaceful uses of atomic energy that were held in Geneva in 1955 and 1958.

The suggestion for the conference was made during a long speech on disarmament that included a discussion of the problems of outer space. Kuznetsov cited recent advances, including the Russian moon shot, and mentioned the need for cooperation in space activities. Following this, he said: "Taking into account the benefits of the exchange of experience in the field of scientific research accomplishments for a more rapid progress in exploring outer space, the Soviet Government intends, in particular, to put forward the proposal to convene under United Nations auspices an international conference of scientists on the exchange of experience in exploring outer space."

Response Favorable

The response to the proposal was generally favorable among the delegates. The United States and Britain approved the suggestion, thus virtually assuring that such a conference would be held. "We welcome this new departure in Soviet policy and hope that it means cooperation in the future work of the United Nations in the field of outer space," Ambassador Lodge said in a statement issued later. In London, the British Foreign Office said that it had no details on the proposal, but that "... we very much welcome the Soviet intentions. Our policy is to encourage the fullest possible international exchange on these matters." Similar responses were made by the leaders of other delegations at the U.N.

Some doubt has been expressed that such a meeting could be held before the last quarter of next year because of the lengthy preparations that would be required. If the model of the "atoms-for-peace" conferences were followed, elaborate displays of devices and techniques would be in order, as well as the

submission of technical papers dealing with all aspects of outer space exploration. Policies on security and declassification would also have to be devised.

Another Meeting Planned

In addition to the projected conference, another space forum is scheduled for next year. This is the meeting of the Committee on Space Research of the International Council of Scientific Unions. The committee is an outgrowth of the International Geophysical Year and seeks to find ways to continue the cooperation in space research that characterized the IGY. The meeting is set for next January and will be held in France. The committee, as a unit of ICSU, is non-governmental in nature, and concerns itself with purely scientific matters, such as advanced notice of space probes, tracking, exchange of data, and the provision of room on space vehicles for experiments prepared by scientists in countries that have no space capabilities. One of the early efforts of the committee was to get international cooperation on the matter of avoiding contamination of the moon.

Although the Soviet Union has voiced objections on the imbalance of the committee representation between Communist and neutralist nations and Western-bloc nations, it is reported that these difficulties are being worked out. The result may be two major exchanges of space data in the coming year, with the Soviet participating in both.

Canadian Atomic Energy Moves Ahead

Canada and Euratom, the six-member European atomic energy pool, have entered into two agreements for a \$10-million peaceful atomic energy exchange program. The first agreement, valid for 10 years, lays down the legal conditions for exchange of source material and special nuclear material on commercial terms, and for exchange of information, technical advice, and training facilities. Under the second agreement, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited will make available its experience with a natural-uranium fueled heavy-water-moderated type of reactor.

The \$10 million is to be contributed over 5 years, half by Atomic Energy of Canada, to be spent in Canada, and the other half by Euratom, to be spent in its member countries — France, West