

President Transfers Elements of Army Rocket Center to Space Agency

President Eisenhower decided last week to transfer all of the Army's space activities to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The action, if approved by Congress, will put Wernher von Braun's team of scientists and engineers at the Army Ballistic Missile Agency in Huntsville, Ala., under civilian control and will remove the Army from the nation's space exploration program. The move, widely anticipated by observers, came as the result of a meeting last week of the President with officials of the Department of Defense, NASA, the Bureau of the Budget, and his science adviser.

In recent weeks, officials of the Eisenhower administration have issued many public statements on the current position of the government on the issue of space activities and military preparedness; these statements, which were very similar in nature, represent the argument behind the President's decision. The argument, in brief, is this: the United States now has adequate rocketry to meet its military needs; the development of high-thrust rockets, such as the Saturn project of the Army agency, would be superfluous to these needs; therefore, such projects, which are of value only for the exploration of space, should properly be under the agency which has responsibility for this activity, the civilian space agency. As the President put it during a press conference: "... [the] great booster is of no present use to the Defense Department. Its interest is in NASA, and that's the reason that we have decided to take this very competent team of scientists, and this facility, the ABMA and put it into the space department so that it can get the kind of booster that it wants."

Comment on the executive action by the individuals concerned, members of Congress, and the press, was generally favorable. Von Braun said in Huntsville that he looked forward to continuing efforts in a progressive program under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The retiring head of the Army agency, General John B. Medaris, commented that he was "both pleased and relieved" that a definitive decision has been made. The day after the President's decision, General Medaris began con-

ferences with T. Keith Glennan, administrator of NASA, to develop a plan for submission to Congress for the orderly transfer of control of the Army agency which, according to Glennan, will not be moved from the Huntsville site.

Approval of the action also came from Senator Lyndon Johnson (D-Texas), chairman of the Special Senate Committee on Space and Astronautics. It was "gratifying," the Senator said, "that the need for action has been recognized. But further action appears to be necessary." Saying that the nation's space program seems to lack "coordinated authority" and "a driver," he ordered a preliminary Congressional inquiry.

The inquiry might have a significant impact because Congress, by law, has veto power over the transfer of any military space activity to NASA. The view generally expressed in Washington is that, after careful study, the House and Senate will approve the transfer.

Out of the President's press conference following his decision came heartening news for the space agency which has suffered from uncertain financing. In reply to a question, the President said that the administration would ask for more funds for NASA for the next fiscal year. "Something more than we had last year," he said. The Administration's last budget estimate for NASA was \$530 million, but Congress cut this figure by about \$30 million. At the time of the cut Glennan warned that it would have severe effects on this country's showing in space activities.

University Participation in International Affairs To Be Studied

An independent national committee has been formed to study the participation of American universities in international education, research, and technical assistance. The new group, known as the Committee on the University and World Affairs, consists of nine leaders from universities, government, business, and foundations. Its chairman is J. L. Morrill, president of the University of Minnesota.

The committee has the strong interest and encouragement of the Secretary of State. His representative, Robert H. Thayer, Special Assistant to the Secre-

tary for the Coordination of International Educational and Cultural Relations, was instrumental in bringing about establishment of the new group.

Report Scheduled for 1960

The committee, in a report that it expects to issue in 1960, will recommend ways in which the traditional concept of the American university can be adapted, in principle and in practice, to present-day relations of the United States with other nations. In the course of preparing its report, the committee will examine the educational and research work of universities related to international affairs, the role of the universities in assisting foreign countries to develop educational and research institutions and the cooperation of universities in government technical-assistance programs and in programs for the exchange of students and faculty.

The Ford Foundation has appropriated funds for the committee's research, operating, and publication expenses. The group will be independent of the foundation, however, and its recommendations will be entirely its own.

In addition to Morrill, the members of the committee are as follows: Harold Boeschstein, president, Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation; Harvie Branscomb, chancellor, Vanderbilt University; Arthur S. Flemming, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare; Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; John W. Gardner, president, Carnegie Corporation of New York; Franklin D. Murphy, chancellor, University of Kansas; Philip D. Reed, chairman of the Finance Committee, General Electric Company; and Dean Rusk, president, Rockefeller Foundation. Ralph J. Bunche, under secretary for special political affairs of the United Nations will serve as consultant.

Since World War II, American universities have expanded their international interests. According to statistics compiled by the Institute of International Education, 47,245 students from 131 foreign countries were studying on American campuses in 1958-59. In addition, 1937 foreign professors, lecturers, and research scholars were on the faculties of 288 American institutions. On the other hand, 1842 faculty members from 367 American colleges and universities were in teaching, research, or consultive assignments in 82 foreign countries.