

tinuation of the test ban. Some U.S. officials are reported to be chafing under the ban which was undertaken in October 1958 to create a favorable atmosphere for the talks. Particularly distressing to these officials, according to reports, is the scientific evidence that indicates that the Soviets, at least theoretically, could be conducting underground tests without any risk of detection. Behind this concern is a report recently made public by the Government indicating that an underground explosion of 300-kilotons could be successfully masked by use of the "big hole" method of muffling the force of an explosion. The report says that if an underground chamber were large enough, the force of an explosion would be contained within it. The report, which was prepared by the RAND Corporation, an Air Force-sponsored research organization, says that, under certain conditions, a 300-kiloton explosion could not be distinguished from a natural earthquake by the detection net that is now proposed for policing the test ban. Explosions in the range of 100-kilotons could not be detected at all by the proposed system, according to the report.

#### **Soviets Ridicule Report**

The Soviet view of the data presented by the report was unusually blunt. "The Soviet experts submit that here their U.S. colleagues are on the brink of absurdity . . . their criteria would leave under suspicion the overwhelming majority of earthquakes registered by the control system." Citing what it calls errors in the data with which the United States supports its case, the report went on to say: "The Soviet experts therefore cannot regard these shortcomings as resulting from carelessness or coincidence, and have come to the conclusion that there has been tendentious use of one-sidedly developed material for the purpose of undermining confidence in the control system, whose basic characteristics were determined by the 1958 Geneva conference of experts."

On 28 December Senator Albert Gore urged the Administration to abstain for 3 years from conducting nuclear tests in the atmosphere but to make no commitment about not resuming them underground. Gore is a member of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy. His suggestion was essentially the same as the one he made November 1958.

#### **\$300 Million Increase in Space Agency Budget Held Inadequate for Major Acceleration of Program**

No new major effort to speed up this country's space program in fiscal year 1961 is planned, according to a newspaper report indicating that the Administration has decided to ask Congress for \$800 million to support the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The figure, which is \$300 million more than the agency's current budget, was reported in the *New York Times*. Official comment on NASA's proposed budget will not be available until late next month when the national budget is published. A good part of the new funds will be taken up by the newly assigned Saturn booster program with the result that NASA's effort in its other programs will be carried on at about the same rate as last year. This, in effect, indicates that a decision has been taken against accelerating the U.S. space program to match or overtake the Soviet Union in this field. Another indication that such a decision might be forthcoming can be seen, observers suggest, in a speech given early in December by George Kistiakowsky, special assistant to the President for science and technology. Speaking before the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, Kistiakowsky said: "If one separates civilian space science and technology from military missiles, . . . one wonders whether our insistence on superiority in space is of overriding importance." Earlier in his talk he had cited the Administration's argument that the larger size of the Soviet missiles gave them no advantage for strictly military applications.

#### **Substantial Cut Reported**

The budget originally requested by the space agency for its activities was cut substantially by the Bureau of the Budget, according to the news report. No definite information on the size of this original request or on the bureau's action will be available until the Congress begins its authorization hearings. Both the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee of the Senate and the Science and Astronautics Committee of the House of Representatives must pass on the Administration's request. Last year, congressional action cut the amount the Administration had requested by \$30 million. Also last year, T. Keith Glennan, the administrator of NASA, suggested that new pro-

grams would require a budget of approximately \$100 million. Despite the Congress' action last year, there is reason to believe that the administrator will receive new support from it in his efforts to gain more funds. A number of Soviet successes, particularly the two moon probes of last fall, are expected to weigh heavily in the committees' deliberations. Another consideration may be the widely publicized fact that after the failure of an Atlas firing just before Thanksgiving no second attempt could be made because there were no more Atlases available.

#### **World Forestry Congress Being Organized by United States**

The fifth World Forestry Congress is to be held at the University of Washington, Seattle, 29 August-10 September 1960. The United States Government is host to this congress. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other agencies are cooperating in its preparation.

This is the first such congress to be held in the Western Hemisphere. The earlier World Forestry Congresses were held in Rome (1926), Budapest (1936), Helsinki (1949), and Dehra Dun, India (1954).

Although the congress is an official one, and many countries will name official delegations, participation will be open to any individual or technician with interests in this field upon application to the Organizing Committee. Such individuals may attend without special invitation.

Some 80 governments within the United Nations have been invited to take part in the congress. There are indications that it may be the largest World Forestry Congress ever held, with 1500 to 2000 participants from 55 to 60 countries.

Responsibility for making the necessary preparations has been vested in a 44-man organizing committee appointed by the Secretary of State. This committee includes representatives from interested federal departments, forestry schools, forestry associations and societies, conservationists, and forest industrialists. The chief of the Forest Service, Richard E. McArdle, has been named chairman of the organizing committee.

The committee has delegated responsibility for detailed preparations to seven working committees. Their ac-