

## 200 Bev: Illinois Chosen in Competition for New Accelerator

The latest installment in the odyssey of the 200-Bev accelerator ended last week with the AEC's selection of a 6800-acre tract near Weston, Illinois, 30 miles from Chicago, as the site for the gigantic machine. Whether the decision of the judges is final is a matter to be determined when the project comes up for congressional authorization next month. But the choice of Weston comes after an 18-month study that started with 200 sites across the nation (*Science*, 18 June 1965), and, while a few of the other five finalists are groaning, it is unlikely that they can upset the decision.

Right up to the public announcement of the AEC's decision, rumors persisted that the costs of the war in Vietnam would cause a postponement of the project. [Just how much the machine will cost is uncertain. In 1963 a federal advisory panel headed by Norman F. Ramsey, of Harvard, used the figure \$240 million; not long afterward, the 200-Bev accelerator casually came to be referred to as a \$300-million machine. The AEC now uses the figure \$375 million, but last July Representative Chet Holifield (D-Calif.) said that

the proper figure is \$395 million.]

In any case, the AEC now says its intention is to build a stripped-down economy model "with potential for expansion at a later date." The effect of this will be an intensity lower than that called for in present designs, but the 200-Bev energy will be unaffected. The initial budgetary request, the AEC said, will be for \$10 million to proceed with the designs that have been under way during the past few years at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory (LRL) at Berkeley. According to Edward J. Lofgren, director of the design study group at LRL, that sum is ample for the first year.

The White House, by all accounts, stayed completely out of the site selection, leaving the task to the AEC, and not even getting in on the publicity when the choice was ready to be announced. Presumably, however, the administration knows what it is committing the government to financially, for, once the designs are completed, the annual costs during the 8-year construction period mount rapidly to at least \$100 million a year by the third or fourth year. And, once the machine

is completed, it is expected to cost at least \$60 million a year to run. Since both Congress and the Executive now work with the concept of an overall science budget, it would be reassuring to know that some sort of long-range policy planning underlies this vast new commitment, but, if such planning exists, it has not been publicly revealed.

In its careful examination of the six finalist sites—these were, in addition to Weston in California, Colorado, Wisconsin, Michigan, and New York—the AEC said it was paying particular attention to the civil rights situation. In the opinion of the NAACP, Illinois and especially Chicago—no mecca of interracial cordiality—was at or near the bottom in this respect. NAACP officials particularly noted that the Illinois legislature had refused to enact a "fair-housing" law, and that Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen has opposed federal fair-housing legislation. (Illinois, however, does have a state executive order supporting fair housing.)

In announcing the selection of the Weston site, the AEC delicately observed that it "noted differing views with respect to non-discrimination in housing, and in certain areas more distant from the site, with respect to integration in schools, but will expect that with the leadership of the state and local governments and with the cooperation and support of citizens and community organizations in the Chicago area, a broad satisfactory record of non-discrimination and equal opportunity will be achieved."

Outweighing these factors, the AEC said, were the excellent service through nearby O'Hare International Airport, the many universities in the area, and the proximity of the Argonne National Laboratory and industrial facilities. What it did not say is that it was the well-organized and vociferous gripes of the Midwest over distribution of federal R & D funds that drove the AEC to conduct an unprecedented nationwide competition for the accelerator. Just how the noise emanating from the Midwest influenced the decision of the five commissioners is not clear, but it is a common view among the elder statesmen of high-energy physics that if the Midwest had not set off a political storm in 1963 after Johnson refused to provide funds for a new accelerator in Wisconsin, the 200-Bev machine would be built in the neighborhood of the Berkeley group that fathered it.—D. S. GREENBERG

