

that the FCC is authorized to charter a non-Comsat domestic system if it chooses, and that Comsat's monopoly is specifically limited to international satellite communications operations. Moreover some outside forces—probably including the Congressional liberals who filibustered against giving Comsat the international monopoly in 1961—would probably argue that the domestic rights should go to almost anyone other than Comsat: giving the corporation a domestic monopoly in addition to its foreign privileges would seem to confirm their worst expectations. And there is the further argument that since Comsat is now a participant in an international telecommunications consortium, which has something approximating a collective veto over the company's actions, giving the corporation rights to the domestic system would be inviting foreign control of an important national asset.

In any case, what Comsat wants is to put up a multipurpose satellite system. It argues that separating television satellites from other satellites for telephone and telegraph transmissions would create technical difficulties, and that it would cost more than a unified system. This is evidently an arguable point. Ford and the networks point out that the two kinds of transmission have differing technical requirements: telephone communications require privacy, and elaborate switching equipment to insure it, while television communications consist of broadcasts to an undifferentiated audience.

More important is the point that Comsat is a profit-making company and is owned chiefly by the carriers; it would undoubtedly continue to charge high rates for its services and for use of its ground facilities. Comsat needs to increase its investment—now about \$200 million—in order to have a larger rate base on which to calculate its earnings. But turning over domestic operation to Comsat would leave both the networks and ETV in pretty much the same relation to the communications monopolies as before.

Virtually the same arguments apply to the stance of A.T. & T. which, while it has not proposed a system, generally takes the same position as Comsat—that a multipurpose system is more efficient and that, in any case, communications satellites should be run by the existing carriers and not by any newly authorized domestic competitors. A.T.&T. does not argue that Comsat

should run the system. But this is a matter which, in view of the fact that in some areas of communications Comsat is A.T.&T.'s alter ego, is probably of relatively little consequence.

The Ford Foundation plan, however imaginative, is far from being a comprehensive model of a system ready to go into operation. Ford submitted it, in fact, not as a preliminary to a request for authorization for itself—it has expressly disclaimed any interest in running such a system—but in order to provoke discussion, promote the interests of ETV in the larger decisions about satellite communications, and buy time while a special commission of the Carnegie Corporation, headed by James Killian, completes a study begun last year of the future of educational television. Accordingly it is of relatively little consequence that Ford's proposal has several vulnerable spots: the plan does not deal adequately with the problem of financing instructional television, for example; nor is it clear that the revenues from the BNS would be sufficient to support cultural programming at the level the Foundation seems to demand. It is also uncertain, despite the networks' apparent interest in the plan, whether network stockholders would agree to turn profits, realized from economies in transmission by satellite, over to what is, in effect, a charitable venture. The communications companies are beginning to develop arguments challenging the Foundation's cost estimates and questioning the wisdom of the radical reconstruction of relations in the communications industry that the plan envisages. While the arguments will rage at least until October, when the FCC is scheduled to receive final comments on the proposals, it appears likely that from now on even the most self-interested pleadings of the industry—as well as the offerings of other critics—will contain far more in the way of concessions for educational television than would otherwise have been the case.

—ELINOR LANGER

Announcements

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare will sponsor a national conference on **air pollution** 12–14 December in Washington. The purpose of the meeting is to "examine the current status of air pollution control and to make recommendations for the im-

provement and acceleration of control efforts throughout the country." Representatives of business, labor, civic organizations, and all levels of government are expected to attend. The tentative program lists plenary sessions on health, technology, economy, and the effects on communities of air pollution; and panel sessions on motor vehicles, heat and power generation, industrial operations, solid waste disposal, and pollution control programs at the state, local, regional, and national levels. Additional information is available from the executive secretary of the conference, Arthur C. Stern, National Conference on Air Pollution, U.S. Public Health Service, Washington, D.C.

Scientists in the News

The State University of New York has appointed **Joseph K. Hill** president of the Downstate Medical Center, Brooklyn, and dean of its college of medicine. Hill, vice president for administration at the downstate center since 1963, will succeed **Robert A. Moore**, who has announced plans to retire at the end of this month.

Recent Deaths

Llewellyn M. K. Boelter, 67; dean emeritus of the UCLA college of engineering; 27 July.

Philipp Frank, 82; retired lecturer on physics and mathematics at Harvard; 21 July.

Robert P. Grant, 50; director of the National Heart Institute, NIH, since March and formerly chief of the European branch of NIH's Office of International Research; 16 August.

Frank Lanni, 46; professor of microbiology at Emory University; 30 July.

Theodore C. Merkle, 47; associate director of the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory; 12 August.

John W. Turrentine, 68; first president of the American Potash Institute; 11 August.

John Leyden Webb, 52; chairman of the pharmacology department at the University of Southern California; 22 July.

Uco Van Wijk, 42; associate professor of astronomy at the University of Maryland; 10 August.

D. Wayne Woolley, 52; biochemist, Professor at Rockefeller University; 23 July.