

British Drop Out of 300-Gev

Geneva. European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) plans to build a 300-Gev accelerator suffered a serious setback last week when the British government withdrew from the project.

The immediate reaction of the CERN council, which includes both scientists and government representatives, was to close ranks and seek ways to save the project. The salvage effort is likely to take the form of a revised design which will retain the main features of the proposed machine but reduce the estimated \$350-million cost of the project by one-fifth, the approximate British share. A CERN working group will undertake the revision.

It is impossible at this point to predict the reception for a revised project. Britain's withdrawal deflates the spirit of the European effort to match U.S. and Soviet work in particle physics research. And the attitude of the French, who earlier declared their readiness to participate in the project, is uncertain, since financial consequences of the recent civil disorders may cause them to reexamine their international scientific commitments.

According to a British statement, the government "was particularly concerned with the effect which participation in this project might have on the balance of resources between high energy physics and other scientific activities and . . . also had to review the implications of the devaluation of sterling."

It was known that devaluation and the related cut in government expenditure had put pressure on the British science budget. News of British withdrawal, however, rocked the CERN council, since it was also known that British participation in the 300-Gev project had won endorsement from the government's science advisory apparatus. The incident illustrates how science-policy advice can be trumped.

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groups generally have limited authority (it's hard for one cabinet officer to tell another how to run his programs), but top HEW officials told a press conference that Cohen should be able to play a "strong coordinating role" that is "not directly analogous" to any other coordinating or advisory role in the U.S. Government. As of this writing, the language of the executive order spelling out Cohen's authority had not been put in final form.

The internal reorganization of HEW's own health programs has been instituted in several stages over the past few months. In March, Cohen announced that Philip Lee, assistant HEW secretary for health and scientific affairs, was being given direct authority over the Public Health Service and responsibility for coordinating the policies of other health programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid, and the health activities of the Children's Bureau. This insured that a political appointee (the assistant secretary) would have authority to implement the administration's health policies without having to

work through the heretofore more or less independent professional bureaucracy headed by the surgeon general.

Subsequent changes have resulted in the creation of three major health agencies, all reporting directly to the assistant secretary rather than to the surgeon general.

The first is the National Institutes of Health, which was elevated in status in early April and given its long-desired divorce from the surgeon general's office. The agency was enlarged to include the Bureau of Health Manpower and the National Library of Medicine, NIH's educational activities being thereby placed on an equal footing with its research functions. In general, the change brings together in one agency the principal health activities dealing with medical schools and universities, a step which had been sought by NIH and by bewildered university officials who complained of having to run to many different, and sometimes conflicting, federal offices for support. James A. Shannon will continue to head NIH until his retirement.

The second major agency to emerge from the reorganization is the new Health Services and Mental Health Administration, whose creation was announced in early April. It has jurisdiction over programs involving the provision of health care to individuals. These include programs for control of chronic and communicable disease; health statistics; direct health services for merchant seamen, Indians, and others; and the National Institute of Mental Health. The inclusion of the phrase "and Mental Health" in the title of the new agency is a testimonial to the political clout of the mental health forces, who feared they would lose visibility if NIMH were swallowed up in a new agency. In mid-June Cohen announced that the regional medical programs on heart disease, cancer, and stroke would also be transferred to the new Health Services agency from NIH, a move which had been expected once NIH got the program off the ground. The administrator of the new Health Services agency is Robert Q. Marston, who has headed the heart, cancer, and stroke program.

The third major agency, announced in mid-June, will be the new Consumer Protection and Environmental Health Service. It will include the hitherto quasi-independent Food and Drug Administration; the national centers for air-pollution control, radiological health, and urban and industrial health; and certain other staff units. The new agency, which will be created on 1 July by executive order, will be the first separate high-level agency established by HEW to attack environmental problems. Some health planners believe the 1966 reorganization of PHS erred by lumping environmental problems and disease prevention into a single bureau. The first head of the new agency will be Charles C. Johnson, Jr., a professional engineer with long PHS experience, who is currently on leave serving as New York City's assistant commissioner of health for environmental health. Johnson will become the highest ranking Negro officer in PHS history.

The Food and Drug Administration, which had previously reported directly to the HEW secretary, has lost some ground on the organizational charts as a result of being included in the new environmental agency—a downgrading which is said to be causing some concern among FDA's friends in Congress. But Lee told reporters the precise placing of FDA on the new organiza-