tion as an appendage to OSTP, working on studies assigned by Keyworth and generally advising on issues of immediate concern to OSTP.

Keyworth originally intended to have the committee meet at least once a month, but current plans are for about six meetings a year. According to Thomas Johnson, an assistant to Keyworth who will provide staff work for the committee, separate panels may be formed and they will meet more frequently.

OSTP officials decline to discuss what topics the committee is likely to tackle until the members themselves have been notified. The committee will, however, come under the terms of the Advisory Committee Act, which means that announcements of its meetings will appear in the *Federal Register*, and the gatherings will be open to the public unless they deal with classified matters. The first meeting will be held in March.

Following are the names and affiliations of the committee members:

Harold M. Agnew
President
General Atomic Company

John Bardeen
Emeritus Professor of Electrical Engineering and Physics
University of Illinois, Urbana

D. Allan Bromley
Henry Ford II Professor of Physics
Yale University

Solomon J. Buchsbaum (Chairman)
Executive Vice President
Bell Laboratories

George A. Cowan
Laboratory Senior Fellow
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Edward E. David
President
Exxon Research and Engineering Company

Donald S. Fredrickson
Fellow-in-Residence
National Academy of Sciences

Edward Frieman (Vice Chairman)
Vice President
Science Applications, Inc.

Paul E. Gray
President
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Robert O. Hunter, Jr.
President
Western Research Company

Arthur K. Kerman
Director
Center for Theoretical Physics
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

David Packard
Chairman of the Board
Hewlett-Packard Company

Edward Teller
Senior Research Fellow
Hoover Institution
Stanford University

—Colin Norman

Corrosion May Not Be Prime Culprit at Ginna

It appears that bad workmanship, not corrosion, led to the emergency shutdown of the Ginna nuclear plant near Rochester, New York, on 25 January. The owner of the plant, the Rochester Gas and Electric Company, has now completed a preliminary inspection of the steam generator that sprang a leak and caused the plant to vent radioactive gases into the atmosphere. The most significant finding is that sloppy maintenance may have caused the accident. Corrosion was originally thought to have been the culprit.

According to the utility's spokesman, Richard Peck, the inspection revealed that there were three foreign objects in the steam generator at the time of the accident: a 7-inch-long piece of heavy boiler-plate metal and two relatively thin pieces of metal. These items apparently were left in the vessel by workmen who had made repairs on the steam system in 1975. The company believes that fast-flowing steam and water may have tossed the metal pieces about in the steam vessel and knocked them against the small tubes that carry pressurized hot water from the reactor.

The inspection found that one of the tubes carrying hot water had burst open in a "fishmouth" break about 5 inches long. This caused a big leak of about 700 gallons a minute. Company officials think the break was not produced by normal corrosion because it occurred in an area which has not corroded in the past—a section of tube midway between support plates. Corrosion generally occurs at the point where a tube meets a support plate. In addition, 16 other pipes were badly damaged.

According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), corrosion and "denting" of tubes and support plates have caused small leaks in the steam generators of dozens of pressurized water reactors. However, there have been only four major leaks: one at Point Beach 1 in Wisconsin in 1975, one at Surry 2 in Virginia in 1976, one at Prairie Island 1 in Minnesota in 1979, and the recent one in January at Ginna. The last two were by far the most serious in terms of the size of the leak. And, significantly, they appear to have been caused by the same kind of sloppy maintenance. At Prairie Island, the damage was done after workmen cleaning out sludge left a piece of hose in the steam generator. The fabric wore away and exposed the wire spring in the hose. The spring, agitated by the flow of steam and water, battered against the pipes and eventually knocked a hole in one of them, causing a leak of about 400 gallons a minute. That, in any case, is the NRC's accepted theory of what happened.

The latest news from Ginna may be encouraging in one respect: it suggests that the very common problem of corrosion will not necessarily lead to the kind of leak that occurred in January. Yet at the same time the Ginna accident raises a warning. It points up one of the great weaknesses of nuclear plants: that they are quite vulnerable to common human error and intolerant of sloppiness. The utilities running the 30 or so plants with corroded steam generators will have to keep this in mind as they undertake the special kinds of maintenance—sludge removal and hole plugging—that contributed to the leaks at Ginna and Prairie Island. No doubt this will raise the cost of maintenance.***—Eliot Marshall***

Wyngaarden Nominated as Director of NIH

James B. Wyngaarden, chairman of the Department of Medicine at Duke University, has finally been nominated by President Reagan as the new director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The official announcement, made on 19 February, had been stalled in the White House for at least 2 months for no apparent reason. Wyngaarden's nomination now goes to the Senate for confirmation, which is expected.

Once Wyngaarden is in office, he will have several top NIH posts to fill. The directorships of five institutes are now vacant, and the head of the National Institute on Aging, Robert Butler, recently announced that he will also be leaving his post later this year.***—Marjorie Sun***