

U.S. NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Centennial Gift from the Equitable Life Assurance Society

THE U.S. National Academy of Sciences, the president of which is Dr. Detlev Bronk, is to receive a gift of a million dollars from the Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States as a contribution to the nation's welfare during the Society's hundredth anniversary. The Academy itself celebrates its centennial in 1963.

The gift will provide for the erection of a Hall of the Life Sciences, in which will be housed the many scientific activities of the Academy and its National Research Council in the fields of biology and medicine.

The National Academy of Sciences is a private, non-profit organization electing its own members from among leading scientists of the United States. The Academy was established in 1863, under a Congressional Charter signed by President Lincoln, to advance science, further human welfare and advise the Federal Government on scientific and technical matters.

The National Research Council was organized by the Academy in 1916 at the request of President Woodrow Wilson, as a part of the Academy, in order to enable representatives of the major scientific and technical societies to co-operate in the efforts of the Academy in the service of science and the national welfare.

The Academy-Research Council is the principal agency through which American scientists participate in co-operative international scientific under-

takings such as the International Geophysical Year and other activities of the international scientific unions.

The present building of the National Academy-Research Council, which is generally considered to be one of the most beautiful in Washington, was constructed in 1924 with funds provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and was dedicated thirty-five years ago by President Coolidge. It is situated on Constitution Avenue, adjacent to the New State Department Building now under construction, and facing the memorial to Abraham Lincoln, who was the founder of the Academy.

Architects for the new Hall will be Harrison and Abramovitz, who have been associated with the design of many of the notable buildings of America, such as the Rockefeller Center, the Lincoln Square project in New York, and the United Nations building.

Dr. Bronk made the following comment on the Equitable gift: "Erection of this new Hall of the Academy to house the medical and life sciences will be of great value to our nation. It is eminently appropriate that the Equitable Life Assurance Society thus contribute to the work of the Academy, for we are both private organizations devoted to the public welfare.

"Both organizations are deeply concerned with the furtherance of those sciences which prolong life and increase health. We are both national in scope. In the beautiful centre of our national capital, the Hall of the building provided by the Equitable centennial gift will symbolize your service to the welfare of the people of our nation and will enable us to increase our service as we, too, begin our second century".



Fig. 1. Architect's drawing of the proposed Hall of the Life Sciences, U.S. National Academy of Sciences, provided by the Equitable Life Assurance Society

When the Academy's building was erected in 1924, it was planned to accommodate additional wings as the need developed and funds became available. With the greatly increased scope of the Academy's work, more space has been urgently needed, and many activities of the Academy-Research Council have had to be housed in widely scattered locations throughout Washington.

The work of the Academy-Research Council is carried on by more than a thousand committees comprising scientists who voluntarily give their time and represent all fields of science; they are served by a full-time staff of more than 1,100. More than 10,000,000 dollars a year is provided for the work of the Academy by private foundations, contracts and grants from the Federal Government, and income from the Academy endowment of approximately 7,000,000 dollars a year.

Elections

Dr. Hugh L. Dryden, deputy administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, has been elected to a second four-year term as home secretary of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Roger Adams, research professor of chemistry, University of Illinois, and Dr. William V. Houston, president of Rice Institute, have been elected members of the Council. The two councillors who are retiring are Dr. I. I. Rabi, professor of physics, Columbia University, and Dr. F. E. Terman, professor of electric engineering, Stanford University.

As members of the Council of the Academy, the home secretary and the two new councillors will share responsibility for the general conduct of the Academy and its National Research Council.

The following have been elected to membership of the Academy:

Dr. Philip H. Abelson, director of the Geophysical Laboratory, Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Prof. Walker Bleakney, Brackett research professor in Princeton University.

Prof. David Bonner, professor of microbiology, Yale University.

Prof. Tom Bonner, professor of physics, Rice Institute.

Dr. Walter Brattain, research physicist, Bell Telephone Laboratories (on leave with the National Defense Research Committee, Columbia University).

Prof. Leo Brewer, professor of chemistry, University of California at Berkeley.

Prof. Frank Brink, dean of graduate studies, Rockefeller Institute.

Prof. Jens C. Clausen, Division of Plant Biology, Carnegie Institution of Washington, and professor of biology, Stanford University.

Prof. Samuel Eilenberg, professor of mathematics, Columbia University.

Prof. John D. Ferry, professor of chemistry, University of Wisconsin.

Prof. Kurt O. Friedrichs, professor of applied mathematics, New York University.

Prof. Hiram B. Glass, professor of biology, Johns Hopkins University.

Prof. M. J. Herskovits, professor of anthropology, Northwestern University; former visiting professor, Graduate School, University of Illinois.

Prof. Herman M. Kalckar, professor of biochemistry, Johns Hopkins University.

Prof. Konrad B. Krauskopf, professor of geology, Stanford University, and geologist, U.S. Geological Survey.

Prof. I. Michael Lerner, professor of genetics, University of California at Berkeley.

Dr. Rudolph L. B. Minkowski, Mount Wilson and Palomar Observatories, and research associate, California Institute of Technology.

Dr. Harry F. Olson, Radio Corporation of America Laboratories.

Prof. C. Pfaffmann, professor of psychology, Brown University.

Prof. Richard J. Russell, professor of physical geography, and dean of the Graduate School, Louisiana State University.

Prof. John A. Simpson, scientific consultant, Argonne National Laboratory.

Prof. Dean S. Tarbell, professor of organic chemistry, University of Rochester.

Prof. Henry Taube, professor of chemistry, University of Chicago.

Prof. James A. Van Allen, professor of physics, State University of Iowa.

Prof. Cecil J. Watson, professor of medicine, University of Minnesota.

Prof. Gregor Wentzel, professor of physics, University of Chicago.

Prof. Fred L. Whipple, director, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory (a close associate with Harvard College Observatory).

Prof. William B. Wood, jun., vice-president of medical affairs, and professor-elect of microbiology, Johns Hopkins University.

Prof. Clarence M. Zener, director, Westinghouse Research Laboratories.

Dr. Raymond E. Zirkle, professor of radiobiology, University of Chicago.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ANTARCTIC ICE-SHEET

THE Royal Astronomical Society Geophysical Discussion of February 27 was held jointly, in the Society's rooms at Burlington House, with the British Glaciological Society. This combining of interests by the two organizations was matched by the bringing together of the theoretical with the directly practical interests, for the main speakers were Dr. J. F. Nye (chairman) on one hand, and M. B. Imbert, Mr. J. G. D. Pratt and Dr. H. Lister on the other. Dr. Nye's important contributions to the study of

ice-sheets are well known and, perhaps more than anyone, he has shown clearly what physical properties should be measured by the expeditions that go to make the necessarily difficult and sometimes hazardous experiments; and he has put together the numbers of the problem so that the field men can plan their experiments and know when they are getting a reasonable answer.

M. Imbert has for many years been principal assistant to Dr. Paul Emile Victor of the Expéditions