

latest commission to land at the board's door is a survey of the pay of academic staff in universities. The government asked the board to take over this task, on a continuing basis, in November, and last week the board issued an invitation for written evidence from interested organizations. The Association of University Teachers, quick off the mark, had submitted evidence before it was asked, and other more slowly moving organizations are certain to follow. The Department of Education and Science, the University Grants Committee and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals are all likely to respond to the call, in their different ways. Some individuals may also feel impelled to write to the board, and their views, too, will be taken into account, although it would be a pity if the board were slowed down in its work by a mass of memoranda from individuals.



Mr Aubrey Jones; new look at university pay.

The last attempt to adjudicate on university salaries was made by the ill-fated National Incomes Commission in 1963. The commission, cosily called "Nicky" by its friends—and much worse things by the TUC, which refused to co-operate—folded up after the Conservative Government was defeated in the 1964 election. Since then, university pay has been settled by the Government, in collaboration with the University Grants Committee. But academics are always inclined to believe that the UGC is in cahoots with the Government, and the Association of University Teachers appealed for an independent review board. Offered the Prices and Incomes Board, it accepted, without, as it says, "prejudice to the future". The AUT argues that salaries of university teachers are much lower than those of people with equivalent qualifications in other walks of life; since the last review, it says, salaries of university teachers have increased by 5 per cent, while those outside academic life have had rises of up to 20 per cent. It rejects the selfless gestures of some professors who have said that in present economic circumstances university teachers should do without a rise. Professors, it implies, are the last people who should make these gestures, as they are well paid—the great mass of the 15,000 membership of the AUT is less well off. Professors

would be the first to complain if the standard of academic work fell because universities could not recruit the best people, it suggests.

The board is not saying when it hopes to finish the survey. But it has a reputation for getting things done, and usually takes about 4–5 months, so there could be concrete results by the middle of this year. Mr Aubrey Jones, chairman of the board, has appointed himself chairman of the team which will investigate university pay. He and another two members of the board team will be assisted by a staff working party consisting of at least another three people, who will be able to call on all the available expertise—economists, statisticians, and the like—employed by the board. In addition, the committee can call on an enquiry team to go out and "ferret out the facts", so there seems no lack of professional zeal in the board's approach to the problem.

### Bigger Machine at Weston

THE plan to build a new proton accelerator at Weston, Illinois, seems to be moving vigorously ahead. Among the several innovations which have been made since the decision was taken six months ago to go ahead with the machine is that the University of Toronto has joined the Universities Research Association Inc. This consortium of universities is formally responsible to the US Atomic Energy Commission for the construction and operation of the new accelerator. Forty-eight universities now belong to the consortium. The membership of the University of Toronto will no doubt excite the interest of other universities outside the United States.

The flavour of the Weston Project has changed significantly in the past few months, and particularly since the appointment last summer of Professor Robert Wilson as director of the project. For one thing, the accelerator is now known as the 200–400 GeV machine, which amounts to an explicit recognition that at some stage in the development of the project the energy of the protons which the machine produces will be doubled to 400 GeV.

The possibility that accelerators might be graded is not of course new, but Professor Wilson seems to have hit on a particularly simple and economical way of doing this. To begin with, the machine at Weston will be fitted out with magnets designed to operate at a much higher field intensity than is necessary for the production of protons at 200 GeV. This means that when more money is available, it will be possible to increase the operating power of the magnets, chiefly by adding to the power supply. This is a simpler means of increasing the rating of a proton accelerator than some of the other devices which have been suggested—the addition of extra magnets, for example. All this amounts to a neat exploitation of the fact that in the larger accelerators, the costs of buying land and building a tunnel are a larger proportion of the total, which in turn implies that the costs of magnets are comparatively less important. Professor Wilson seems to have been able to push this balance even further by paying close attention to the design of cheap magnets—this is why it is possible for him to think of building into the new machine magnet capacity that will not be used for some time to come.