

GENERAL SCIENCE

National Academy Wing

► THE EQUITABLE Life Assurance Society Hall of the Life Science, has been constructed as a west wing to the National Academy of Sciences, on Constitution Avenue, Washington.

Half the funds to complete the Academy building have now been raised. The ultimate structure, as envisioned four decades ago by George Ellery Hale, American astronomer, and Bertram Goodhue, architect of the original building, will further include an east wing and a 700-seat auditorium to complete the square on the north.

Of the \$3,200,000 required to complete the building, \$1,000,000 was given by Equitable.

"This bountiful gift," said Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, retiring president of the Academy, at the dedication (June 27), "symbolizes the mutually rewarding partnership that has developed in this nation among leaders of business, science, and the government. And in concrete terms, it has proved to be the stimulus and example that will permit us to bring to fruition the noble dream of those who gave the Academy its first permanent home."

Since the Equitable gift, an additional \$600,000 has been given or pledged to the Academy by private foundations and industry, including \$250,000 from the Ford Foundation, \$100,000 from the Rockefeller Brothers Funds, \$100,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation, \$100,000 from the Casey Fund, and \$50,000 from a large industrial corporation.

The Academy, established in 1863 by a Congressional charter signed by Abraham

Lincoln, is a private organization of distinguished American scientists and engineers dedicated to the furtherance of science and its use for human welfare. Although it is not a governmental agency, the Academy is called upon by its charter to advise the Federal Government, upon request, in matters of science and technology. The Academy will celebrate its centennial next year.

In making its gift to the Academy in 1959, to advance the work of the Academy in the field of human health, the Equitable Society was observing its centennial. Founded in 1859 by Henry Baldwin Hyde, who directed its affairs for forty years, the Equitable Society has grown to become the nation's third largest life insurance company.

The new wing will be used to house the many scientific activities of the Academy and its National Research Council in the biological, medical, and behavioral sciences.

Architects for the Hall of the Life Sciences were Harrison and Abramovitz, who have been associated with the design of many of the notable buildings of America, such as Rockefeller Center, the Lincoln Square Project in New York City, and the United Nations Building. Wallace K. Harrison, senior member of the firm, was as a young man associated with Bertram Goodhue in the design of the main Academy building, which was built in 1924 with funds provided by the Carnegie Corporation.

The new wing, which contains two stories and a ground floor, has been constructed in the same architectural style as the main building, which Mr. Goodhue referred to as Alexandrian. The exterior is of Imperial

Danby marble quarried in Proctor, Vermont. It was chosen as the closest available approximation to the New York State marble used in the original building. The copper roofing duplicates the roof of the old building.

The first floor provides a conference room of 800 square feet and eight offices. On the second floor is a second conference room of the same size and 14 offices.

A refectory on the ground floor can be used as a cafeteria or as a banquet hall for Academy dinners.

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SPACE

Males Dominate Space Program

► COMPLAINTS by women about male dominance in space flight and charges that the fairer sex is being discriminated against in the nation's space program have prompted a Congressional investigation.

The House Science and Astronautics Committee has appointed a special 11-member subcommittee headed by Rep. Victor L. Anfuso (D.-N. Y.) to look into these allegations, which are denied by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Rep. Anfuso, who believes women have a right to at least try for a place in space, will begin open hearings July 17.

No woman has been selected for space flight training, according to NASA, "because we do not know of a single woman who can meet the requirements."

A look at NASA's specifications for space flight candidates shows that the candidate must be male. Obviously no woman could qualify.

According to NASA requirements:

"1. The candidate must be an experienced jet test pilot and preferably be presently engaged in flying high performance aircraft.

"2. *He* (italics added) must have attained experimental flight test status through the military service, the aircraft industry or NASA, or must have graduated from a military test pilot school."

In addition he must have a degree in the physical or biological sciences or in engineering, be a U.S. citizen under 35 years of age; and have been recommended by his present place of employment.

As evidence that NASA does not discriminate on the basis of sex in choosing candidates for space flight, it should be noted that female chimpanzees and monkeys have been selected by the space agency for this purpose.

The Russians sent female dogs to blaze the trail for men in space because they reported them to be smarter and more easily trained than male dogs.

But when asked by SCIENCE SERVICE whether this superior performance in female dogs could indicate that women might perform better in space than men, Dr. A. Blagonravov, internationally known Soviet space expert, said on a recent visit here, "I do not think one can or should compare female dogs with women."

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HALL OF LIFE SCIENCES—The new west wing to the National Academy of Sciences, just completed, stands sedately in beautiful surroundings.