FROM MEXICO

Observatory Moves

Mexico's National Astrophysical Observatory, now at Tonantzintla, will be moved to a new site in the sierra of San Pedro Martir, Baja California, at a cost of 51 million pesos ($4,080,000).

The new site is at La Encantada, 125 miles south of Ensenada, and at an altitude of 10,168 feet.

"The site, in accordance with terrestrial observations undertaken by experts, and confirmed by satellite Tiros, is one of the most propitious locations for astronomical observation on this continent," says Dr. Guillermo Haro, observatory director.

"Apart from having a very low overcast index, the site offers very great atmospheric transparency with very low turbulence.

In addition to transfer of the Tonantzintla Observatory equipment to the new site, Dr. Haro plans acquisition of new equipment, with optical parts to be constructed for the most part in Mexico. Recently Mexico has made considerable advances in work of this nature, he says.

A new telescope, with two meter diameter (80 centimeters more than the one in Tonantzintla), will cost around 10 million pesos ($800,000).

Electronic and mechanical equipment will probably be acquired in Europe or the United States. However, the underframe of the new observatory will be totally Mexican.

Most of the money for the costly move will be in allotted to construction of a road from San Felipe to Ensenada, and from San Felipe to the mountain site. Total cost will be 37 million pesos ($2,960,000).

Actual moving of the Tonantzintla equipment will require 4 million pesos ($320,000). The balance will be for construction of the new observatory.

Federal and state Governments both will help on the road. *Emil Zubryn*

Atomic Arms Training

Atomic arms training has been added to the curriculum in Mexican army schools, according to a brief report by the Department of National Defense.

The Department ordered the addition of the courses "in accordance with the industrial and technological development of our country."

The first course, described as an "introductory course on nuclear energy," has been assigned to the Military Engineering School for students of construction, industrial and transmission engineering.

Generals, defense officials, and government spokesmen generally refuse to reveal the extent of the program or what arms will eventually be included. They admit only a round-table discussion at the Engineering School covering "the atom, its energy and application in the army, in accordance with the philosophical and political doctrine of our government."

One official denies Mexico is preparing for possible fabrication of the atom bomb and says this is outside of the current regime's policy, (and allegedly that of all Latin America), a policy which bans nuclear tests and atomic weapons.

Parasites Endemic

Fully 33 percent of Mexico's population is affected by amoebic intestinal parasites, according to gastroenterologist Dr. Octavio Orozco of the Mexican Social Security Institute Hospital.

Speaking at a meeting of regional medical associations in Guadalajara, Dr. Orozco labeled amoebic parasites as the most extensive of parasitic diseases in the republic.

Records show that about 10 percent of the amoebiasis victims die from the disease, Dr. Orozco says. Gravest complication is amoebic liver abscess.

FROM AUSTRALIA

Russians Study Fishery

Russia now knows more about Australian fishing grounds than does Australia.

Three Russian ships have been probing the depths off the Western Australian coast and in the Great Australian Bight over the last year. Fishing authorities believe the teams have been closely examining Australia's fishing grounds.

Apart from having the usual scientific gear, the vessels are all equipped with experimental and conventional large-scale trawling gear. The last of the three vessels, the Lira, with 10 scientists on board, has left Melbourne to report to the Vladivostok Institute of Fishing and Oceanography. "It was obvious their research work is far in advance of anything Australia has tackled," J. C. Wharton, deputy director of Victoria's Fisheries and Wildlife Department, says. This superior knowledge could give Russian fleets an advantage of several years if Australia were to start competing on a commercial scale.

"We have carried no broad surveys

(see p. 187)