Internationalizing Batavia

The way for a small country to provide its physicists with the latest equipment for experiments in particle physics is to associate with its neighbors. The cost of the next generation of particle accelerators is beyond the means of all but the largest single nations. Europe learned this years ago, when CERN was established. And high-energy physics more than most fields, has always been rife with feelers and proposals for international cooperation as an answer to the cost of doing research.

The Soviet Union and the United States have both built only national facilities. But for the U.S. giant under construction at Batavia, Ill., that picture may change.

Canadian physicists have been urging their Government to become involved in the United States' 200- to 400-billion-electron-volt accelerator.

Their American counterparts are willing. If the governments act, the door will be open.

The Canadian interest is not new; Canadian physicists had once proposed building their own experimental wing at Batavia (SN: 8/3, p. 108). Now what they propose is a level of internationalization for the whole accelerator, and a partnership in it for Canada.

The group, which seeks more or less to represent the interest of Canadian particle physicists generally, includes Dr. E. P. Hincks, chairman of the physics department at Carleton University in Ottawa, chairman; Dr. A. W. Key, a University of Toronto research fellow now attached to the National Accelerator Laboratory at Batavia; Dr. Bernard Margolis, professor of physics at McGill University in Montreal; Dr. J. D. Prentice, professor of physics at the University of Toronto; Dr. W. T. Sharp, associate chairman of the department of mathematics at the University of Toronto, and Dr. D. G. Stairs, professor of physics at McGill.

Their proposal is taking the partnership route at least in part because of difficulties in determining a piece of equipment that could be the Canadian contribution under the earlier plan; partnership would also offer a better voice in laboratory management.

Specifically, the Canadians propose that the Canadian Government supply \$4 million a year for five years, after which a review would be made and further contributions determined. The money would be held in Canada in an account that the director of NAL could spend, at his discretion, on needs of the accelerator purveyed by Canadian contractors.

To manage the Canadian side of the



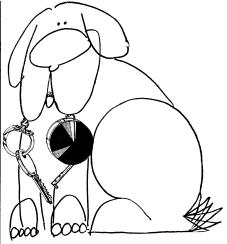
Dr. Key: Batavia liaison from Canada.

project, they suggest formation of Canadian Universities Research Association parallel to the Universities Research Association that is now managing the United States effort. A joint committee of the two associations would settle matters of joint concern in laboratory policy.

While neither government has yet made an official comment on the suggestion, the feeling of the Batavia staff and management is favorable. "We are enthused," says Donald R. Getz, assistant director of NAL. "We can see lots of good things in it." And Dr. Norman Ramsey, president of the U.S. association, says: "It seems to me that the form of cooperation and joint participation proposed by the Canadian Study Group is particularly suitable and should be highly effective. Dr. Ramsey also sees reason to anticipate favorable U.S. Governmental reaction to a formal Canadian proposal, which could come by summer. Collaboration with still other nations might be similarly welcome, but none have applied. In this hemisphere there is very little high-energy physics done outside the United States and Canada; Latin America is devoid of research in the

The proposal comes at a time when there is a certain pessimism among Canadian physicists about future support by their Government. Two large national projects, the Queen Elizabeth II Observatory and a facility called the Intense Neutron Generator, have been cancelled. Studies have suggested that Canada needs to push development of applied physics while saying little or nothing about basic physics, thus giving the impression that basic physics is doing all right as it is.

But the study group is optimistic. This project is "not huge," says Dr.



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Prentice. He feels that there were valid scientific reasons for cancelling the neutron generator and the observatory, and the scale of proposed Canadian participation in NAL is about equal to other Canadian efforts. It matches, for instance, the cost of Tri-University Meson Facility, a meson-producing accelerator being built for nuclear physics by a group of universities in western Canada; the same scale could be applied to support for other branches of physics as well. "We would foresee a group of universities wanting to do something similar in solid-state physics," says Dr. Prentice.

FEDERAL SUPPORT

Implementing the NSB proposals

Following a pattern established during World War II, the bulk of Government money for science is allocated to individual researchers to carry out specific projects—a system that has meant that certain institutions are indirectly heavily endowed while others get very little.

This was the problem addressed by the National Science Board when, in a report last month (SN: 3/8, p. 231), it proposed reallocation of Federal research money to better support graduate degree-granting institutions themselves.

To minimize the limitations of the project grant system and to implement the NSB recommendations, Senator Fred Harris (D-Okla.) and others have introduced a bill to establish a National Institutional Grants Program to substantially increase, by \$400 million, support of scientific research and education from the community college to the university level.

The money, which each year after 1970 would equal 20 percent of total Federal funds for academic science, would go directly to the institutions, rather than to individuals within them, and could be used by the schools to support programs of their own choosing. The distribution would be administered by the National Science Foundation. The bill has been referred to the Senate's Committee on Labor and Public Welfare which is likely to schedule hearings within the next few months.

In the House, Representative George P. Miller (D-Calif.) has introduced legislation also aimed at marshalling support for university science (SN: 3/8, p. 231). His proposal is to distribute funds by a complicated formula incorporating proportions of graduate and undergraduate students, designed to feed less wealthy institutions, in more states.

The Harris proposal may sidestep objections to the Miller bill.



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