One of the ways in which the research grants program seeks to stimulate advances in the air pollution field is by supporting multidisciplinary conferences at which experts with experience in complementary areas can give intensive consideration to a single problem. An example was the Conference on Atmospheric Emissions from Sulfate Pulping (Kraft process), held April 25–28, 1966, at Sanibel Island, Fla. This meeting was supported in part by a research grant from the Division of Air Pollution. It was an international meeting, with representation from Canada, Finland, Italy, Mexico, Sweden, and the United States. Participants included scientists from Government, industry, and universities. Among the purposes of the meeting was to document the present status of control technology in the pulping industry and to identify needs for new technology and additional research.

An important segment of the research and development activities of the Division of Air Pollution is supported by contracts with commercial and industrial companies and nonprofit institutions and by project agreements with other Federal agencies. Work performed under contract is essentially an extension of in-house research activities; that is, the basic purpose of awarding contracts for research and development is to take advantage of the special technical capabilities available in industry and elsewhere in Government.

The Division of Air Pollution uses the contract mechanism as one of its prime tools for promoting technological advance in the air pollution field. As the one Federal agency with broad responsibility and experience in dealing with all aspects of the air pollution problem, the Division of Air Pollution is uniquely capable of identifying needs for new technical knowledge and making judgments as to the proper timing of projects which will help meet such needs. This approach enables the Division to see that research and development projects deemed essential to the national control effort are not neglected for lack of incentive; thus, the use of contracts complements the grants mechanism, in which the initiative must come in large measure from outside the Federal Government.

In short, the most important of the criteria for awarding contracts are basic considerations of whether the work to be performed will provide knowledge needed in the pursuit of better control of air pollution and whether the work can most effectively and efficiently be performed outside the Division of Air Pollution. Other criteria are employed, as necessary, to assign priorities to projects for which contracts have been suggested and to select the most qualified contractors for particular projects.

The review procedure for contract proposals from non-Federal sources includes the following steps: (1) Evaluation by technical staff of the Division of Air Pollution and assignment of priority among projects considered worthy of support; (2) review in the Office of the Chief, Division of Air Pollution, particularly from the standpoint of program integration; (3) if appropriate and desirable, evaluation by non-Federal consultants; (4) final assignment of priority. Awards are made, within the extent of available funds, in order of priority.

Two current projects, in which research by industry is being supported by contracts from the Division of Air Pollution, illustrate the way in which this mechanism is being used to promote technological