

The principal requirements for the study were knowledge of present types of relationships between Federal laboratories and universities, identification of successful experiences, and definition of the major impediments to more productive interplay. To obtain the necessary information several members of a committee task force visited and interviewed laboratory managers and their staffs at some 75 Federal research and development installations and one Federal contract research center located throughout the United States.

Information gathered by the task force was analyzed, summarized, and submitted together with recommendations for improvement action to the Federal Council in September 1967. The Federal Council has approved the report in principle and it is presently in the process of revision and publication for possible general use.

Concurrently with the study of educational relationships the Committee on Federal Laboratories was asked to help evaluate a closely related policy statement proposed by the National Science Board to facilitate increased use of Government facilities by the general scientific community. A report and recommendation was presented to the Federal Council and accepted for appropriate action. Data, discussion, and recommendations pertinent to this proposal have been incorporated in the aforementioned report on university-laboratory relationships.

CURRENT AND FUTURE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

In July 1967, in order to provide a more meaningful name in line with its present functions, the name of the standing committee was changed to the Committee on Federal Laboratories.

Currently the Committee is engaged in followup activities to its study and recommendations on "Education and the Federal Laboratories." Tentative plans are being made for a symposium of Federal laboratory and department officials to discuss the findings and facilitate implementation of the recommendations throughout the Federal service. Planning for this is an early item of business.

One specific recommendation of the committee is that a further study of some aspects of university-laboratory relationships be undertaken jointly by a group made up of both universities and Federal representatives. If feasible this might begin by planning for the above symposium to include university as well as Federal laboratory participation.

Another subject which the committee is tentatively exploring for possible future study is the procurement, management and utilization of Federal R. & D. equipment and facilities. As yet no definitive answers have been arrived at as to the feasibility and advisability of such a study.

In addition to the foregoing, numerous factors such as restrictions on travel, which tend to hinder training programs and communication with the wider scientific community; the compression of salaries at the top of the grade structure; manpower ceilings; and similar matters which reduce the ability of Federal laboratory managers to manage in a flexible and effective manner, are, and will continue to be, matters of concern to the Committee on Federal Laboratories.