

periods of time as embodied, for example, in a legislative proposal for a Visiting Scientist and Scholar Program which has recently been submitted to Congress by the Civil Service Commission. Additional authority to permit the temporary hiring of research scientists and engineers for periods up to five years without going through competitive civil service examinations and registers and without granting them permanent civil service status would facilitate the hiring of eminent scientists and ensure much greater flexibility in more readily restructuring laboratories' staffing capabilities. The present law precluding the taking of annual leave during the first 90 days of employment hinders, in some instances, the recruitment of top quality and senior personnel. The ability to retire people after 30 years of Federal service at the option of management would also help.

Question 3. You mentioned that you were a "little disappointed" in the effect of the three symposia which were sponsored in conjunction with the Civil Service Commission. What did the symposia attempt to accomplish and why were you a "little disappointed" in the results?

Answer: In general the symposia sponsored by the Federal Council for Science and Technology were designed to exchange ideas about effective ways of solving administrative matters and Government problems—particularly those pertaining to personnel. A number of valuable ideas were exchanged.

In the Committee's experience, management and staffing problems in Federal laboratories are due much more frequently to the policies, practices and decisions of managers at various levels within the departments and agencies than to the Government-wide laws and regulations. The symposia attempted to deal with this problem through fostering communication (1) laterally among laboratory management officials regarding the system and what is possible and (2) vertically with agency officials at various bureau and department levels in order to arrive at better understanding of the operating level's problems and needs. While the symposia have been generally successful in respect to item 1, we were in the main unsuccessful in obtaining the attendance of a broad spectrum from the higher administrative levels.

In retrospect, another weakness in the planning was that the Committee did not include a mechanism for followup to determine how much was achieved. From random comments received from some participants it did appear that some symposium generated information was useful. Accordingly, plans for the next symposium will include provisions for a systematic followup to evaluate results.

Question 4. If the Committee decides not to study the procurement, management and utilization of Federal R&D equipment and facilities, is there any other organization at the OST level that could perform the study? What considerations would be before the Committee in deciding whether or not to make the study?

Answer: The Committee on Federal Laboratories is currently making an abbreviated survey of Federal equipment policies and practices. Whether or not the Committee decides to make a detailed study and analysis will depend on its ability to devise a meaningful objective study pertaining to the utilization of equipment, being able to obtain the necessary types of information, and being able to foresee some rationale for analysis that would seem to promise useful and generally relevant conclusions and recommendations.

At present we know of no other organization at the OST level that might readily perform such a study, although, of course, the Office of Science and Technology could, if it so decided and funds were available, hire a person and/or staff specifically for the purpose of monitoring the management and utilization of Federal facilities and equipment.

Question 5. What information about Federal laboratories—both directly and contractor operated—should be collected and maintained by the Executive Branch? Who should do it? How desirable and feasible would it be to set up a clearinghouse for information about selected Federal laboratories?

Answer: In order to carry out the intent behind this question one needs to resolve a basic matter of understanding, namely, definition of what constitutes a laboratory. To illustrate, we frequently have difficulty in responding to queries about the "laboratories" of the National Bureau of Standards. Does the Bureau have three laboratories—the Institute for Basic Standards, the Institute for Materials Research, and the Institute for Applied Technology? Or does it have three laboratories—one in Washington, D.C., one in Gaithersburg, Md., and one in Boulder, Colorado? Looking at the definition from a more specific point of view, is each of the technical divisions, each with its own distinctive types of activity, a laboratory? In other agencies with numerous small field stations, one needs to make a decision as to minimum size. Is a five, ten