

year AEC Chairman Seaborg wrote to the Secretaries of Commerce, Interior, and HEW, expressing our desire to identify facilities and talents at AEC laboratories which might be used in support of pollution control efforts. We have, as a result, had a series of meetings with representatives of these departments and identified a number of areas of direct interest. To date, only two relatively small programs have been initiated as a result of these efforts, but several large programs are being considered and discussed. I feel confident that this effort will result in further utilization of AEC facilities and talents in programs conducted for other agencies at AEC facilities, and vice versa.

In line with a recent broadening, by the Congress, of AEC's authority to conduct work for Federal and non-Federal sponsors, we have recently initiated a similar effort in the broader area of health and safety. Our efforts in this area are not due to an anticipated diminution of AEC support at our laboratories, but rather because we agree with the desirability, as expressed by Congress, of increasing the effective use of national laboratories for broad national purposes.

Again, in your introductory remarks, you did refer to this legislation which was passed last year.

Effective use of Federal laboratories for national purposes in this way is not without problems and difficulties. The cooperating agency's authorities to undertake the work must be considered, the impact of proposed new programs on ongoing laboratory activities must be evaluated, and the performing laboratory must guard against becoming a job shop operation. In all cases the capabilities of other R. & D. performers, including universities and private industry, must be considered. None of these has, in our experience, presented insurmountable difficulties once a special capability at a performing laboratory and the direct interest of a responsible agency have been matched. I judge this matching to be, at present, the dominating difficulty in the extension of the process described above which in my opinion is the most desirable one at hand to achieve effective use of Federal laboratories for broad national purposes.

The director of a laboratory plays a critically important role and flexibility to examine new ideas and pursue them to a reasonable state of development is essential if he is to fulfill his role in insuring effective use of the laboratory whether it be for agency or broader national goals. Flexibility is not easily achieved. Federal R. & D. budget proposals are defended in an atmosphere which requires a strong and explicit statement of aims and objectives to be successful in the competition for funds. It is difficult to justify funds to exploit the bright idea which has not yet happened in the face of programs and objectives of demonstrated merit. This difficulty is encountered at all levels of the budget process—congressional, executive, agency, and laboratory.

A degree of flexibility does exist in the conduct of programs at AEC's multiprogram laboratories and single-program laboratories which pursue physical and biomedical research programs. Unanticipated developments are common in these programs and flexibility to pursue promising ideas is required by the nature of the work. Most frequently, these ideas are within the originator's research area and may be pursued without deviating significantly from broad budget categories. It is a limited flexibility and not an entirely satisfactory solution, for activities cannot be carried out at levels greater than es-