

be the first reactor in Finland, and assistance in securing fuel for this reactor and for the critical assembly will constitute the first Agency projects involving the supply of enriched uranium from the pool of this material placed at its disposal by the United Kingdom, the USA and the USSR.

Further Operations

While preparations for these projects are now well advanced, there are also indications suggesting the possibility of further operations of this kind. A few months ago, the Agency received an enquiry from the Austrian Government as to whether and under what conditions it would be possible for the Agency to supply uranium enriched up to 90 per cent in the isotope U-235 for a 5 MW reactor now being constructed near Vienna. The Agency's agreements with the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States provide that the special fissionable materials that these countries can supply will be of an isotopic enrichment of up to 20 per cent. The agreements with the UK and the USA, however, also provide that the materials may be enriched to a higher degree if the parties so agree and if the fuel is used for materials testing or research.

The Agency made a preliminary enquiry with the three Governments as to whether they would be in a position to supply the fuel needed for the Austrian reactor. In reply, the United States and the United Kingdom Governments indicated their ability to do so, as well as the prices to be charged. The results of the preliminary enquiry have been communicated to the Austrian Government, and further negotiations are now in progress.

It may also be recalled in this connexion that at the Agency's last General Conference the Tunisian delegate announced that his Government would approach the Agency for the supply of 10 kilogrammes of enriched uranium. It would thus appear that more and more countries are gradually recognizing the advantages of securing nuclear fuel from the Agency rather than directly from the supplying countries. It is also a happy augury that the countries which are in a position to supply fuel have given evidence of their desire to strengthen the Agency's role as an international channel of supply.

In the final analysis, the success of this role will depend on the willingness of both the supplying and the recipient countries to make use of the newly-created international machinery. So far as the recipient countries are concerned, a predominant consideration would naturally be the ease and speed with which the transactions are carried out. In this respect the Agency has already established a creditable record. In less than two years of its existence it completed one major supply operation, which does not compare unfavourably with the record of bilateral transactions by the most highly advanced countries with a well established administrative machinery and large organizational and technical resources. Again, it might be pointed out that in response to the request from Finland, which was received early in November 1959, the Agency took less than three months to have the project approved by its Board of Governors, at the next meeting held in January, and to initiate active steps for its execution. With the completion of this project, the pattern will have been set and, it is hoped, the Agency will steadily move towards the fulfilment of the role which is envisaged for it in its Statute.

MOBILE EXHIBITION IN MEXICO

Since January this year, a mobile atomic energy exhibition has been touring the principal cities of Mexico. In organizing this exhibition, the National Nuclear Energy Commission of Mexico was assisted by the International Atomic Energy Agency which has

placed its second mobile radioisotope laboratory at the disposal of the Mexican authorities.

In many States of the Republic, the visit of the mobile laboratory has given a powerful impetus to

atomic training and research. Universities have made use of the laboratory for the training of young scientists in the basic isotope techniques. As a sequel to the work initiated with its aid, some universities are planning to start regular training courses in this field.

The laboratory, which is a gift to the Agency from the United States, has been put to its first assignment

in Mexico. It will shortly be sent to Argentina for a period of six months for use in training courses.

IAEA's first mobile radioisotope unit, also donated by the United States, has been used for training purposes in Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece and Yugoslavia, and has now been sent to the Far East.



Dr. Augusto Moreno y Moreno, of the National University of Mexico, speaking at a scientific meeting held during the exhibition (Photo: Mexican Nuclear Energy Commission)



Conference attended by the Rector of the University of Nuevo Leon (speaking), the Governor of the State (left of the speaker), and representatives of the National Nuclear Energy Commission and the Technological Institute of Monterrey (Photo: Mexican Nuclear Energy Commission)



Professors of the University of Nuevo Leon carrying out experiments in the mobile laboratory (Photo: Mexican Nuclear Energy Commission)



The first mobile isotope laboratory being shipped at Trieste for the Far East