

COPY

THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

WASHINGTON

March 23, 1954

Dr. Detlev W. Bronk, President  
National Academy of Sciences  
2101 Constitution Avenue  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Dr. Bronk:

I understand that a major United States program in geophysical research is being planned for the years 1957-58, to be conducted in cooperation with more than 25 nations as part of the International Geophysical Year effort. In our recent conversation you informed me that the National Academy of Sciences, acting at the request of many scientists of the country, has been instrumental in formulating this program, and has recommended that the National Science Foundation consider it for submission to the Bureau of the Budget and the Congress. The purpose of this letter is to convey to you the views of the Department of Commerce with respect to this proposed activity.

The Department of Commerce has, of course, a direct interest in programs that promise to be of value to commerce and industry. Problems such as those concerned with weather analysis, radio wave propagation, surveying and navigation, longitude and latitude determinations, geomagnetism and oceanography are of operational interest to such agencies of this Department as the Civil Aeronautics Administration, the Weather Bureau, the National Bureau of Standards, and the Coast and Geodetic Survey. Because of these agencies are also charged with responsibility for service and research in various fields of geophysics they have further important interests in the scientific program proposed for the International Geophysical Year.

The critical geophysical services that are provided by these bureaus, including weather forecasting, prediction of usable radio frequencies, and preparation of navigational data, are utilized by major segments of our economy: foreign and domestic trade, shipping, and communications; manufacture; air, land, and sea transportation; and agriculture. Continued improvement in these services depends heavily on continued advances in basic geophysical research. The Department of Commerce therefore expects to derive great benefit from the concerted efforts of thousands of scientists supported by large numbers of private

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institutions and sister democracies. We recognize that the results derived from this great undertaking will be of practical value for many decades.

Because of these considerations, and after study of the proposed undertaking by our appropriate bureaus, the Department of Commerce will be glad to see this activity adequately supported financially. We shall be happy to cooperate as best we can by enabling our scientists to participate. If you think it would be helpful I shall be happy at the appropriate time to present to the Bureau of the Budget the interests of the Department of Commerce in the support of this plan.

Sincerely yours,

Sinclair Weeks