

news from the NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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WASHINGTON--William W. Rubey, professor of geology and geophysics at the University of California, Los Angeles, has been named director of the Lunar Science Institute, in Houston, Texas, Frederick Seitz, president of the National Academy of Sciences, announced today. The Academy has accepted interim responsibility for operation of the Institute until a consortium of universities can be formed to take over its direction.

The formation of the Lunar Science Institute was announced by President Lyndon B. Johnson in Houston on March 1, 1968.

The chief objective of the Institute is to provide a base for academic scientists participating in the lunar exploration program, working in the Lunar Receiving Laboratory, or using other facilities of the Manned Spacecraft Center devoted to study of the moon. Lunar samples gathered by U.S. astronauts will be brought first to the Lunar Receiving Laboratory. The Institute will also serve as a center for the analysis and study of lunar data obtained as the result of NASA unmanned missions, such as Surveyor and Orbiter.

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As director of the Institute, Dr. Rubey will be responsible for its day-to-day scientific management. A national board of governors, appointed by the president of the Academy as broadly representative of academic institutions interested in lunar science, will establish policy and review operations at stated meetings. All managerial responsibilities will be subcontracted to Rice University. The Institute will eventually be established in a converted residence on Rice University property. Until these facilities are ready (in about a year), the Institute will occupy space in or near the Manned Spacecraft Center. Present plans call for a staff of about six professional persons (including the director and an administrative officer), adequate library, secretarial and custodial staff, and office space to accommodate ten or twelve visiting scientists as the program gets underway.

In making the announcement, Dr. Seitz said, "The appointment of Dr. Rubey, who has been a member of the Academy since 1945, is a significant starting point for what should certainly be an influential demonstration of university-government collaboration in the laboratory. The establishment of an academic facility as an adjunct to a unique government laboratory will benefit university researchers with unequalled opportunities to explore another celestial body. The collaboration will benefit the laboratory staff by providing opportunities for direct, personal access to the best academic science. Science and the nation will benefit by enhanced communication between the two groups. I speak as well for our Committee on NASA-University Relations, whose ideas are now being given substance, when I express my great delight that Dr. Rubey has been persuaded to accept this post."

Dr. Rubey went to UCLA from 38 years with the U.S. Geological Survey. He also served as chairman of the Division of Geology and Geography of the National Research Council, 1943-46, as well as Chairman of the NRC, 1951-54. He has twice been elected to the Council of the Academy for three-year terms, in 1951 and 1965. He was a member of the National Science Board from 1960 to 1966. The President of the United States awarded him the National Medal of Science in 1965. During his tenure as director of the Lunar Science Institute, he will also serve as adjunct professor of geology at Rice and maintain his present professorship half-time at UCLA.

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(This announcement is being issued simultaneously by NASA.)