Proceedings of the Board of Regents Meeting held on September 22, 1980

Particular emphasis will be given to X-ray astronomy in an effort to capitalize on the wealth of information provided by the Einstein Space Laboratory (the orbiting HEAO-2 X-ray telescope). In addition, a strengthening of the solar physics program is planned through phasing of additional resources into the Langley-Abbot program.

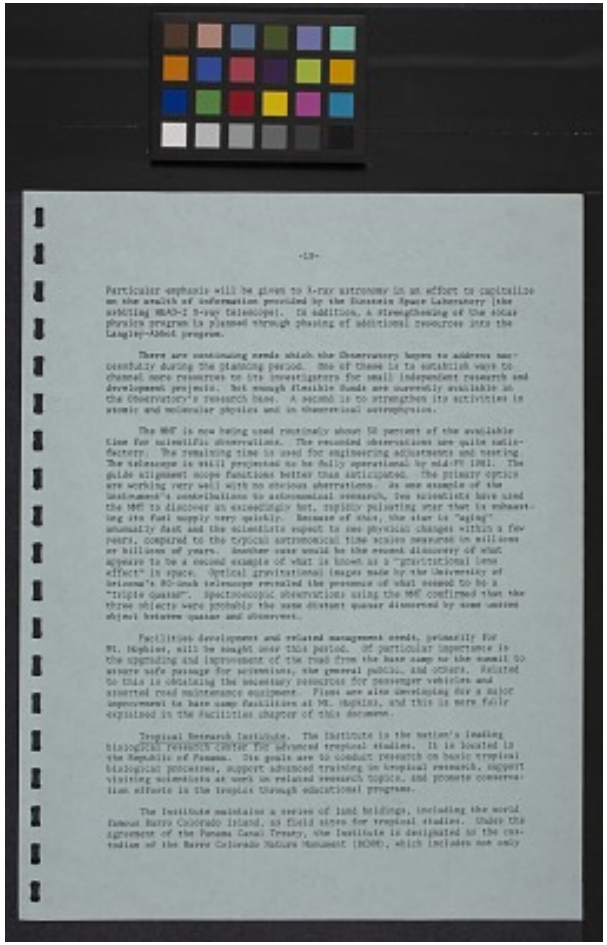
There are continuing needs which the Observatory hopes to address successfully during the planning period. One of these is to address successfully during the planning period. One of these is to establish ways to channel more resources to its investigators for small independent research and development projects. Not enough flexible funds are currently available in the Observatory's research base. A second is to strengthen its activities in atomic and molecular physics and in theoretical astrophysics.

The MMT is now being used routinely about 50 percent of the available time for scientific observations. The recorded observations are quite satisfactory. The remaining time is used for engineering adjustments and testing. The telescope is till projected to be fully operational by mid-FY 1981. The guide alignment scope functions better than anticipated. As one example of the instrument's contributions to astronomical research, two scientists have used the MMT to discover an exceedingly hot, rapidly pulsating star that is exhausting its fuel supply very quickly. Because of this, the star is "aging" unusually fast and the scientists expect to see physical changes within a few years. Another case would be the recent discovery of what appears to be a second example of what is known as a "gravitational lens effect" in space. Optical gravitational images made by the University of Arizona's 90-inch telescope revealed the presence of what seemed to be "triple quasar". Spectroscopic observations using the MMT confirmed that the three objects were probably the same distant quasar distorted by some unseen object between quasar and observers.

Facilities development and related management needs, primarily for Mt. Hopkins, will be sought over this period. Of particular importance is the upgrading and improvement of the road from the base camp to the summit to assure safe passage for scientists, the general public, and others. Related to this is obtaining the necessary resources for passenger vehicles and assorted road maintenance equipment. Plans are also developing for a major improvement to base camp facilities at Mt. Hopkins, and this is more fully explained in the facilities chapter of this document.

[[underlined]] Tropical Research Institute. [[/underlined]] The Institute is the nation's leading biological research center for advanced tropical studies. It is located in the Republic of Panama. Its goals are to conduct research on basic tropical biological processes, support advanced training in tropical research, support visiting scientists at work in related research topics, and promote conservation efforts in the tropics through educational programs.

The Institute maintains a series of land holdings, including the world famous Barro Colorado Island, as field sites for tropical studies. Under the agreement of the Panama Canal Treaty, the Institute is designated as the custodian of the Barro Colorado Nature Monument (BCNM), which includes not only



The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities.Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

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