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236 Southern Building, Washington 5, D.C.
telephone NATIONAL 8-5070

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\$46 MILLION EURATOM-GERMAN ASSOCIATION CONTRACT SIGNED FOR FAST BREEDER REACTOR RESEARCH

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 7 -- The German "KRB" group, Karlsruhe, and the European Atomic Energy Community have signed a five-year association contract for joint research on fast breeder reactors.

The contract covers an expenditure of \$46 million, 40 per cent of which is to be contributed by Euratom, which will also contribute scientists and technicians to the project. The direction of the research will be the responsibility of a steering committee, to which each of the contracting parties will appoint four members.

At Karlsruhe, plutonium reactors with three different cooling systems (helium, dry steam and sodium) will be tested, the aim being to prepare a thoroughly developed and tested power reactor prototype plan.

The following construction projects will be carried out at Karlsruhe under the contract:

- 1) the Karlsruhe fast zero-power plant (SNEAK), a plutonium fueled critical assembly;
- 2) a Karlsruhe fast thermal Argonaut reactor (STARK), to be built by converting the existing Karlsruhe Argonaut reactor;
- 3) the Karlsruhe fast sub-critical assembly (SUAK).

In July 1962 a similar association contract for the development of fast breeder reactors at the Cadarache center was concluded with the French atomic energy commission (CEA). Discussions are now under way between the United States and Euratom for the supply of the plutonium required for the Cadarache and Karlsruhe projects, as well as for a broad exchange of information in this field.

A further fast-breeder association contract is to be concluded with the Italian nuclear energy commission (CNEN). Thus Euratom is participating in all fast reactor projects in the Community. The amount of \$73 million has been allocated under Euratom's second five-year program (1963-67) for research in the field of fast reactors. This sum represents the Euratom contribution (40 per cent) to these three association contracts. France, Germany, and Italy will contribute the remaining 60 per cent. This makes a total of about \$180 million which the Community is devoting to this field.