



Harold Brown

Caltech's New President

Harold Brown, Secretary of the Air Force, will be the new president of the California Institute of Technology. He will come to Caltech shortly after he leaves office on January 20, at the end of the Johnson Administration.

Robert F. Bacher, who has been Caltech's provost since 1962, will serve as acting president during the period between Lee DuBridge's departure for Washington and Harold Brown's arrival in Pasadena.

Dr. Brown, 41, is a physicist who has won worldwide respect for his outstanding scientific and administrative abilities. Always quick to understand and solve problems, he was graduated from the Bronx High School of Science at 15, with a 99.5 average. He went through Columbia University in two years. ("Everything was accelerated during the war," he says modestly.) He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Columbia and also won the Green Memorial Prize for maintaining the highest undergraduate record.

At 22 Brown received his PhD in physics from Columbia and while working on his doctorate was appointed Lydig Fellow and physics lecturer. After receiving his doctorate in 1949, he became a lecturer in physics at the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey.

In 1950 he put aside teaching for a career in research and development as a staff member of the University of California's Lawrence Radiation Laboratory at Berkeley. He joined the staff of the Laboratory's Livermore branch when it opened in 1952 and in 1960 succeeded Dr. Edward Teller as its director.

At Livermore he was closely associated with Project Plowshare, a program seeking to apply nuclear power to peaceful uses such as recovering oil deposits, creating heat reservoirs, excavating harbors, and utilizing low-grade ores. He also studied the feasibility of creating water reservoirs in arid regions through the use of nuclear explosives.

He served as scientific adviser to the United States delegation at the 1958 nuclear weapons tests detection conference in Geneva and as senior science aide to the American delegation at the nuclear test ban conferences in Geneva in 1958 and 1959.

In 1961 he was named one of America's ten outstanding young men by the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce. He also received the Navy's Distinguished Public Service Award that year.

Brown became Director of Research and Engi-

neering for the Defense Department in May 1961. This was the third-ranking civilian job in the Defense Department. Before coming to the Pentagon post he had been a scientific adviser to the Air Force, and he was a member of the Navy's special steering committee to guide the development of the Polaris missile.

President Johnson named Brown Secretary of the Air Force in 1965. In that position he has had a three-sided job—Air Force technical adviser, general supervisor of all research and development in the Department of the Air Force, and operational chief of the Advance Research Projects Agency and the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group. It was recognized that he would bring to that office a deep perceptiveness about people, a remarkable ability as a listener, and great competence in recognizing and solving scientific problems. These attributes helped him to deal with what could have been an extremely difficult situation, and over the three years the military leaders, who had looked on him as an esoteric scientist, grew to trust and admire him as a person and to respect his decisions.

His colleagues describe him as "dynamic, vigorous, straightforward," and as a man who exhibits "high integrity as well as a great intellectual capacity." He is an inveterate reader and averages four or five books a week. His wife, Colene, is a Purdue University graduate and a former department store buyer. They have two daughters—Deborah, 13, and Ellen, 11.

When President DuBridge originally announced his intention to retire in the summer of 1969, a faculty committee was appointed to recommend candidates for a new Caltech president to the board of trustees. This committee had been hard at work for 18 months when DuBridge requested that his retirement date be moved up to this January in order to accept his new appointment. In those 18 months the committee had assembled a list of 150 names, and 40 of these were investigated in detail. This faculty committee and a trustee committee then thoroughly studied 15 of the 40 and narrowed the field to six, who were interviewed in off-campus visits. Finally, four men were invited to come to Caltech to meet with the trustees, faculty, and students. The result was the selection of Harold Brown, and the comment from the committee chairman: "Our committee was determined to find not just a good president, but a great one. We feel confident that we have done just that." □