

Dr. Harold C. Urey to receive honorary doctorate at the Centennial of Science at the University of Notre Dame

May 5, 1965

Dr. Harold C. Urey, Professor-at-Large, Department of Chemistry, University of California, San Diego is one of 12 eminent figures in the world of science scheduled to receive honorary doctorates at a special convocation May 15 marking the Centennial of Science at the University of Notre Dame.

Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., University President, will officiate at 3:00 p.m. ceremonies in The Stepan Center. Professor Michael Polanyi, the celebrated physical chemist, philosopher and author from Oxford, England, one of the 12 recipients, will be the principal convocation speaker.

Seven of the recipients, including Dr. Urey, are Nobel Prize winners and all except Dr. Polanyi, who lives in England, are members of the National Academy of Sciences.

The Centennial of Science convocation is one of a series of events being held at Notre Dame May 14 and 15 in conjunction with the spring meetings of the University's Board of Lay Trustees and the Advisory Council for Science and Engineering. A feature of the centennial weekend will be three lectures on Notre Dame science-past, present and future. Several receptions and dinners honoring the recipients and guests are planned.

It was the discovery of heavy hydrogen which won the Nobel Prize for Dr. Urey in 1934. Born in Walkerton, Indiana in 1893, he graduated from the University of Montana in 1917, where he majored in Zoology. His graduate studies were taken at the University of California where he received his Ph.D. in 1923.

In 1923-24 Dr. Urey studied atomic physics under Niels Bohr at Copenhagen. He was engaged during the next five years as an associate in Johns Hopkins University, then joined the Department of Chemistry at Columbia.

At Columbia, Dr. Urey began developing the techniques which led to the discovery of the heavy isotope of hydrogen. With the advent of World War II and the atomic bomb project, Dr. Urey sped his investigation of heavy water, which was considered to be one of the possible materials for slowing neutrons in an atomic pile. He served as one of three program chiefs in the Manhattan District Project which conducted research fundamental to the development of the bomb.

As the nation has moved into the space age, Dr. Urey's work has expanded to include an exhaustive study of the earth's solar system. At present he is considered one of the world's leading authorities on the subject of the moon. He serves as a Ranger TV Experimenter for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory which launched the Ranger series on its historic missions to the moon.

Besides Drs. Urey and Polanyi, the recipients are: Dean A. Adrian Albert, University of Chicago; Prof. Melvin Calvin, University of California, Berkeley; Crawford H. Greenewalt, E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Company; Prof. Karl Herzfeld, Catholic University of America; and Dr. Donald F. Hornig, Chairman of the President's Science Advisory Committee.

Others who will accept honorary doctorates are: Dr. Arthur Kornberg, Stanford University School of Medicine; Prof. Edward L. Tatum, The Rockefeller Institute; Dr. Charles H. Townes, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Dr. James D. Watson, Harvard University; and Dr. Eugene P. Wigner, Princeton University.