

Regents approved establishment of the John Dove Isaacs Chair in Natural Philosophy

January 22, 1982

FOR RELEASE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 22 - P.M.'s

University of California Honors Scripps Professor

The University of California Board of Regents approved on Friday (January 22) the establishment of an endowed chair in honor of the late John Dove Isaacs, a professor at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, and for more than 30 years a "pioneer" in the conquest of the oceans. Isaacs died at age 67 on June 6, 1980, of cancer.

The Regents, meeting in San Francisco, approved the establishment on the UC San Diego campus of the John Dove Isaacs Chair in Natural Philosophy. Funding of \$125,000 will come from the UC Endowment for Presidential Chairs and will be matched in equal amount by Mrs. John D. Isaacs and the Foundation for Ocean Research, a non-profit foundation dedicated primarily to the support of research at the University of California.

The annual income from the endowment funds will be used in support of the teaching and research of a distinguished academician, who will be designated the holder of the John Dove Isaacs Chair.

The Issacs Chair is the fourth endowed chair established at the UC San Diego campus and the first to honor a Scripps Institution of Oceanography faculty member.

Dr. Richard C. Atkinson, chancellor of UC San Diego, called Isaacs a great teacher and a world-renowned oceanographer. "It is very appropriate that the first chair honoring a Scripps faculty member should be named for John Issacs who was an exceptionally innovative contributor to our understanding of the world's oceans. In recognition of John Isaacs' broad intellectual interests, we plan to appoint outstanding scholars from a wide range of disciplines to be holders of the Isaacs Chair."

Prof. William A. Nierenberg, director of Scripps, said, "Isaacs was one of a handful of postwar pioneers in the conquest of the oceans. His life and career were coincident in what will be recognized as the greatest era in oceanography," he said. "The Isaacs Chair will honor one of the small group of scientists who built Scripps into one of the nation's foremost oceanographic institutions."

Isaacs received his bachelor of science degree from the University of California, Berkeley School of Engineering in 1944 and joined Scripps in 1948 as an associate oceanographer. He became a professor of oceanography in 1958, was director of Scripps's Marine Life Research Group from 1958 to 1974, and became director of the university's statewide Institute of Marine Resources (IMR) in 1971, a position he held until February 1980.

He was a rarity in academe, having achieved the status of professor and head of a UC institute and election to membership in prestigious scientific and academic organizations - all without a Ph.D. He was a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the World Academy of Art and Science.

During his years as head of IMR, the institute's programs expanded in scope and service to society and its California Sea Grant College Program is now the largest of its kind in the nation.

Isaacs was often described as a renaissance man of science, who was equally at home in the laboratory, classroom, or administrator's chair. His research activities covered a wide spectrum of oceanographic pursuits from ocean ecology and deep-sea photography to climate studies and ocean power resources. His interests extended into such far-reaching areas as energy from salt domes and fresh water from icebergs to seawater irrigation and radioactive waste disposal.

For more information contact: Paul W. West, 452-3120

(January 22, 1982)