

*Lloyd V. Berkner*

(1905-1967)

Lloyd V. Berkner, a Fellow of the Arctic Institute and one of the outstanding American scientists of modern time, suffered a fatal heart attack in Washington on 4 June 1967 while attending a meeting of the National Academy of Sciences. On 7 June he was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Dr. Berkner was known widely as the "Father of the International Geophysical Year" and more than anyone else in North America developed the idea and gave early impetus to that worldwide effort that did much to promote and improve scientific co-operation throughout the world.

He was born in 1905 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. At the time of his death his legal residence was in Florida. After graduating in 1927 with a B.S. degree in Electrical Engineering, he really had three careers: one as a research scientist, one as a research administrator, and one as a naval officer. He excelled in all three.

Early in his career he supervised the installation of the first radio range system. A little later he became a member of the first Byrd Antarctic Expedition and played an important part in designing and installing the communications system for that expedition. Part of that time he spent in New Zealand and established the relay system for antarctic communications. He made constructive studies of long-range radio propagation, and also designed and constructed the first sweep frequency ionospheric sounder.

Berkner was appointed the first Executive Secretary of the Research and Development Board of the newly created Department of Defence, and strongly influenced the co-ordination of the research and development programs of the three armed services. In 1950, at the request of the Secretary of

State, he carried out a study of the relationships of science and foreign policy. In his report, Berkner recommended the establishment of the post of Science Adviser to the Secretary of State, as well as the appointment of science attachés in the principal embassies of the United States. These recommendations now have been put into effect. In 1951 he became head of Associated Universities, Inc., and in that capacity for ten years supervised the operation of the Brookhaven National Observatory for the Atomic Energy Commission. Next he accepted the invitation of a group of southwestern businessmen to organize the Graduate Research Centre of the Southwest, with headquarters in Texas. The purpose was to stimulate graduate education and advanced training in that region.

In 1927 Berkner was commissioned an Ensign in the U.S. Naval Reserve and designated a Naval Aviator. From 1941 to February 1946 he served in the active naval service. He worked in electronics in the Bureau of Aeronautics and rose to the rank of Captain in 1945. Early that year he was assigned to the Pacific Fleet and served aboard the U.S.S. *Enterprise* in the Okinawa campaign. Although he was returned to inactive duty in February 1946, he kept up his Naval Reserve status and in 1955 was promoted to Rear Admiral.

Doctor Berkner was awarded many honours during his active and productive career. He held at least eight honorary degrees from universities in the United States and from the universities of Calcutta, Uppsala, and Edinburgh. Among his military and civilian awards were: Commendation Ribbon of the Secretary of the Navy; Legion of Merit; Honorary Officer, Order of the British Empire; Special Congressional Gold Medal; Gold Medal of the City of New York; and Silver Medal of the Aeronautical Institute.

*J. C. Reed*