

# New Agreements Build On Existing Projects

By Marilyn Berger  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The three agreements signed by the United States and the Soviet Union in Moscow yesterday essentially formalize relationships that had already been established.

The accords are in the area of energy, housing and health.

Three U.S. officials briefed reporters at the State Department on the agreements. They were closely questioned on why so much high-level attention was being accorded them.

Dr. Charles C. Edwards, assistant secretary for health of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, who discussed the agreement on cooperation in artificial heart research, conceded: "I suppose it could have been handled much more simply."

However, he said, the agreement gave direction from the highest leaders of the two countries on where the research emphasis should be.

The agreement, a U.S. statement said, "adds an important new dimension to already existing exchanges" on heart disease which were started by the health agreement signed on May 23, 1972, at the first Nixon-Brezhnev summit.

It involves cooperative research in improving methods of diagnosis and treatment of a disease that Edwards said kills 1 million persons and incapacitates 12 million to 14 million in the United States annually.

Emphasis will be placed on joint development and testing of heart devices such as pacemakers and artificial heart valves, working toward the development of an artificial heart, Edward said. The Soviet Union "is second to none" in expenditures for this kind of research. The agreement, he said, is "very meaningful from a political and scientific point of view." But he said, "It is more a political statement, than a medical aid."

Head of the U.S. medical group participating in the cooperative research project will be Dr. Michael DeBakey of Baylor University, a prominent surgeon who has performed heart operations on Soviet officials.

The team will be working under the aegis of the National Heart and Lung Institute of the National Institutes of Health. In the Soviet Union the project will be headed by Dr. Valery Shumakov.

John C. Sawhill, administrator of the Federal Energy Ad-

ministration, said the agreement in the field of joint scientific and technological research and development programs in fossil fuels as well as in nonconventional sources of energy such as heat from the sun and earth and synthetic fuels.

He said the United States had much to learn from the Soviet Union in the conservation of energy through efficient use. A joint committee on energy is to be established.

The United States and the Soviet Union signed an agreement for cooperation in the field of nuclear energy earlier this year.

Sawhill said that while there already was a cooperative program the new agreement "would expedite it and give it a focus, a framework, that it didn't have." The agreement, he said, builds on earlier agreements.

The Soviet Union, Sawhill said, has "committed itself on a broad basis to share information." But there are no specifics in the agreement, which Sawhill said he hoped would provide "a better assessment of how the Soviet Union fits into the world energy outlook." This would be useful as the United States moves toward independence in energy, Sawhill said.

Sawhill said the agreement does not deal with commercial discussions on Soviet energy projects such as the exploitation of Siberian natural gas.

These are being left to private firms.

He said the agreement provides for the worlds two largest energy-producing and consuming nations to work cooperatively to develop energy resources and to work for conservation.

The housing agreement calls for a joint research project on construction in earthquake-prone areas. L. Wayne Germanian of the Department of Housing and Urban Development said the two countries hope "to reduce the consequences of earthquakes" by improving the design of shelters and by studying the "behavior of prefabricated houses in these areas."

When asked what the United States could gain from such an agreement, given the fact that the Soviet Union is not known for its excellence in housing construction, Germanian said that the Soviet Union could build demonstration projects on a larger scale and more quickly than the United States, if it made the decision to do so.

Gertmanian said he hoped U.S. experts would be permitted to visit earthquake-prone areas in the Soviet Union but that no specifics had been worked out. Moscow has shown considerable sensitivity about foreign visitors in these areas, some of which also happen to be the sites for nuclear tests.