

TELLS OF STUDIES PLANNED IN AFRICA

Astronomer Bok Says Group to Spend 18 Months in Star Observations

BY JUSTINE ROBINSON

Plans for an expedition, which he will head, to study the center of the celestial Milky Way from South Africa were explained last night by Dr. Bart J. Bok, noted astronomer, to the Barnard Astronomical Society at Frye Institute.

The speaker, professor of astronomy at Harvard University and an associate professor of the Harvard Observatory, is visiting Chattanooga on a lecture tour. He spoke yesterday before the Engineers Club on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. He is chairman of the national research councils committee of UNESCO.

Harvard University for many years has maintained an observing station in Bloemfontein, Orange Free State, South Africa, according to Dr. Bok. The station was erected there because the central stars of our galactic (or Milky Way) system are at best observation range in the Southern Hemisphere.

"I and a special group from this country and Ireland will leave for the South African station early next year. We shall probably remain there 18 months, allowing for two full observation seasons," said Dr. Bok.

"Our equipment will be the very latest and most advanced, including especially photo-electric photometers which were greatly improved during the war."

An interesting feature of the expedition, Dr. Bok said, is the method of its financing. "A private institution such as Harvard could never accumulate enough funds to promote such study alone. Therefore the university joined hands with two observatories in Ireland, Dunsink Observatory in southern Ireland and Anagh Observatory in northern Ireland.

"Winning the co-operation of these two Irish observatories was almost an historical phenomenon," declared Dr. Bok with pointed humor. "Drawing up of the contract probably marked the first time lawyers of northern Ireland and Eire sat down at the same table. This was a very nice example of how working together in science breaks down international barriers," remarked the astronomer, who sees in UNESCO an instrument to bring the peoples of the world together in harmonious living.



TALK ASTRONOMY—Pictured at a meeting of the Barnard Astronomical Society last night at Frye Institute are (left to right) seated, Clarence T. Jones, Barnard president emeritus; Dr. Bart J. Bok of Harvard University, principal speaker; standing, Dr. Karel Hujer, professor of astronomy at the University of Chattanooga, and Harold J. Strobel, president of Barnard Society. —Times Staff Photo.

At the beginning of his lecture, Dr. Bok outlined the general structure of the Milky Way system and explained how knowledge of its composition had been obtained. "All the stars which you see in the sky belong to our Milky Way," he said. "There are about 100,000,000,000 and the sun is a typical example."

This was Dr. Bok's second appearance in Chattanooga. He addressed the Barnard Society last fall. He was born in Horn, Holland, and studied at the universities of Leyden and Groningen there before coming to the United States in 1929 on a Harvard fellowship.

"The United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organization was formed for building defenses of peace." Dr. Bok said in a talk before the Engineers Club at Hotel Patten.

"Not a fire department to stop immediate war, as the Security Council might be called, UNESCO is a fire prevention service designed to see that causes of war are kept down. It seeks to build up a long-range foundation for peace and is organized to bring peoples together at all levels," he said.