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\$11 million computer buy set by LLL

LIVERMORE - Lawrence Livermore Laboratory will soon purchase \$11 million in complex computer equipment that will be used in thermonuclear energy research throughout the United States.

Laboratory officials are soliciting bids among six qualified computer manufacturers and the cross-country communications network linking them to Livermore.

The largest computer system will be installed at the central computer facility at Livermore.

The smaller computers, all linked to the central facility, will be located at Controlled Thermonuclear Research (CTR) facilities located throughout the nation.

These centers are the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in New Mexico, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory at Oak Ridge, Tenn., and the Plasma Physics Laboratory at New Jersey's Princeton University. Through the computer network, the center at Livermore will provide the necessary information to pursue the highly complex and technical fusion research.

The new \$11 million computer system will be funded by the Atomic Energy Commission through the Division of Controlled Thermonuclear Research. That agency within the AEC sponsors nearly all of the nation's efforts to achieve controlled fusion reactions by confining the "super hot" explosive gases with a magnetic field.

Achievement of the process would insure the nation a cheap source of power to generate abundant electricity.

Livermore got the new computer system because the facility (primarily engaged in nuclear weapons research and development in the past) has pioneered the development of large scale computer networks.

In fact, there exists in Livermore the most powerful computational facilities in the world. The Soviet Union, however, takes exception to this claim.

The new CTR computer facility at LLL will be placed under the direction of Dr. John Killeen.

Fusion research is a virtual impossibility without the use of computers to analyze the magnetic confinement experiments and to work out calculations of various reactions.

By storing the results of the experiments in the central facility, each research center will no longer need to work out each problem alone.

Each research center will have access to the codes and equations already developed by other research centers and stored at Livermore.

Moreover, each CTR research center will have access to the larger computer needed for successfully more complex experiments and analyses.

This system, according to the laboratory, will save time and money by avoiding the costly overlapping and duplication of equipment and research efforts.