

helmi (chairman). Gregory Pincus is chairman of the study section and Sam R. Hall is its executive secretary.

Grants of the hormones will be made to qualified investigators who apply to the study section. Application should be made in a letter that describes the proposed work and provides an estimate of the amount of hormones required. Requests will be granted to the extent that supplies allow.

It is hoped that by this service both clinical and fundamental studies on the anterior pituitary hormones will be stimulated. At the same time, it is thought that much advantage will be gained from the fact that a large number and variety of studies may be made by numerous investigators, all using the same highly purified and carefully tested preparations. Continuing support for the program will be sought if, as is thought by the study section, work in these fields has been limited by the availability of suitable materials.

New Planned Parenthood Research Committee

A biological research committee has been established by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America to lead a "concerted program" of research for improved methods of birth control and of infertility therapy. The committee, composed of 13 leading scientists in the fields of biology, physiology, biochemistry, medicine and population, is headed by Carl G. Hartman, formerly the director of Ortho Research Foundation in Raritan, N.J.

Establishment of the committee is an outgrowth of a conference on the physiology of reproduction sponsored jointly last spring by PPFA and the Population Council. At that conference it became clear, according to Hartman, that "despite tremendous gaps in our knowledge, there does exist a sufficient base of information to justify concerted efforts to solve the known problems in this field." He pointed out that increased knowledge of research in human reproduction would not only lead to better methods of contraception, but would also aid the 10 percent of American married couples who are involuntarily childless.

Relics of Ancient Culture in Japan

Hokkaido University has announced discovery of relics from the earliest culture yet found in Japan. The discoveries were made by an expedition from Hokkaido University and the Institute of Regional Exploration, Ann Arbor, Mich. T. P. Bank, American Fulbright scholar from Michigan, and Sakuzaemon Kokama of Hokkaido were coleaders.

The artifacts—mainly obsidian and stone blades, scrapers, and hand axes—were imbedded in a thick water-deposited terrace that is more than 10,000 years old. The terrace is located near the Sea of Okhotsk coast of Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island. The expedition has discontinued work but will resume exploration next year.

U.N. Technical Assistance Pledges

As a result of the seventh Technical Assistance Pledging Conference held at United Nations Headquarters in October, a total of \$30,295,000 will be made available by 65 governments toward the 1957 operations of the expanded program of technical assistance. This represents the largest sum yet provided for 1 year and exceeds by more than \$2 million the funds pledged at last year's conference.

As in the past, several governments announced that they would make their pledges known at a later date; others assured the conference that their contributions would be at least at the level of their 1956 support, but might be increased in the next few months. The government of the United States announced a maximum contribution of \$15.5 million of which \$14 million would be paid to match the first \$14 million of pledges from other governments; the balance of \$1.5 million would be contributed at a reduced matching percentage to be announced later.

Three countries—Albania, Morocco, and the Sudan—made pledges to the Technical Assistance Fund for the first time, and Honduras renewed support that had lapsed in 1956. Nineteen other countries increased the amount of their pledges over 1956, accounting for an additional \$750,000. Argentina, Bolivia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Spain, Syria, and Switzerland all raised their contributions by 50 percent or more.

News Briefs

■ The Brooklyn Botanic Garden has obtained a 223-acre tract of woodland at Kitchawan, N.Y., adjacent to Croton Reservoir, which it will use as a field station for research. Gifts for the purchase and development of the station already have reached nearly \$150,000. The garden is seeking to raise \$250,000, which would include a partial endowment fund.

■ A 38-acre site in Oak Ridge, Tenn., has been sold to the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies to provide space for six new permanent buildings. The new construction is expected to cost \$3.5 million.

Scientists in the News

DICKINSON W. RICHARDS, JR., director of Columbia University's medical division at Bellevue Hospital, ANDRE F. CURNAND, professor of medicine at Columbia, and WERNER FORSSMANN, practicing physician of Bad Kreuznach in Western Germany, will share the 1956 Nobel prize for medicine and physiology, which this year amounts to \$38,683.59. The recipients are being honored for their discoveries concerning heart catheterization and pathological changes in the circulatory system. The official citation reads: "[Their] investigations have meant that diagnosis can now be made earlier and with greater certainty than before. In this way, the prospects of preventing further deterioration are increased."

Behind the award is the story of a line of inquiry that began 27 years ago when Forssmann introduced a catheter tube into a vein of his right arm. Sitting behind a fluoroscope and watching a large mirror, he pushed the tube gradually into the right ventricle of his heart and then had x-ray pictures made. This ended the investigation for several years until a paper on his findings came to the attention of the two men at Columbia. They took up the research where Forssmann had left off.

ROBERT F. MEHL, director of the metals research laboratory and head of metallurgical engineering at Carnegie Institute of Technology, was presented with the Grand Medal of Le Châtelier by the council of the French Society of Metallurgy at its recent annual meetings in Paris, France.

I. S. RAVDIN, who holds the John Rhea Barton professorship of surgery at the University of Pennsylvania, was retired from service in the U.S. Army Reserve, Medical Corps, in ceremonies that took place at the university on 30 Oct. Ravdin is the first medical officer to reach the rank of major general in the Army Reserve Corps. His retirement ceremony was attended by ranking officers from Philadelphia and Washington and from the Second Army Command Headquarters, Fort George G. Meade, Md. Gaylord P. Harnwell, president of the university, spoke on the program.

H. MAX HOUTCHENS has been named chief of the Veterans Administration clinical psychology division in the central office at Washington, D.C. He succeeds H. M. HILDRETH, who has accepted an appointment with the Public Health Service. Previously Houtchens has served as chief consulting psychologist to VA's clinical psychology division in the psychiatry and neurology service in Washington.