Singer Acquitted

The U.S. Court of Appeals has reversed itself and ordered acquittal of Marcus Singer, professor of zoology at Cornell University who had been convicted of contempt of Congress. In 1953 Singer told the House Committee on Un-American Activities that he had once been a Communist, but he refused to name others with whom he had been associated in Communist activities. He was indicted in 1954 and since that time has been suspended from teaching duties, although receiving full salary.

He has continued his research in the fields of growth and regeneration, work supported in part by the American Cancer Society. After the court decision was announced, Provost Sanford S. Atwood of Cornell told the press that the legal proceedings had "produced no evidence of Prof. Singer's unfitness to teach and he is being reinstated as a teaching member of the faculty."

Asian Nuclear Center

Representatives of 16 nations met in Washington this month to work on the organizational and financial structure of an Asian nuclear center to be established at Manila. The United States has offered $20 million to equip the center and pay initial operating costs.

The United States invited the members of the Consultative Committee of the Colombo Plan to Washington for the following purposes: to decide finally whether they wish to go ahead with the idea of establishing the center; to see for themselves at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, N.Y., the kind of institution toward which they would be working; to set up a plan for the organization and future financing of the center.

The Colombo Plan Committee consists of representatives of all the non-Communist Asian nations from Pakistan to Japan, except South Korea and Nationalist China, plus contributing members—Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. Together these countries form a loose organization for mutual assistance. Robert McClintock, chairman of the U.S. delegation, was elected permanent chairman of the meeting.

Europeans Tour Nuclear Power Facilities

A group of 50 industrialists and government officials from Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands toured various installations of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and the plants of several private companies during July. The purpose of the tour, which was sponsored by the AEC, was to provide the visitors with firsthand knowledge of the technology associated with setting up large power reactor complexes.

Since the primary interest of the visitors was in reactors that can be built in Europe at an early date, their itinerary took them to facilities actually engaged in various phases of work on the pressurized and boiling-water reactor systems. Included were commission sites where pressurized and boiling-water reactors have been designed, constructed, and operated, and plants engaged in fuel-element fabrication, manufacture of pressure vessels and other components, and chemical processing.

The governments of the six countries represented in the group signed in Rome on 25 Mar. the treaty which, when ratified, will establish the European Community for Atomic Energy, known as EURATOM. The purpose of EURATOM is to contribute to the formation and the rapid growth of a European nuclear industry. Early this year three representatives of these countries surveyed the nuclear power programs of the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom and in May issued a report, *A Target for EURATOM,* that recommends a goal of 15 million kilowatts of installed nuclear electric capacity by the end of 1967. The report stated that to meet the goal it would be necessary to begin with reactor systems that are the most advanced technologically.

New High-Strength Steel

The National Bureau of Standards has experimentally produced steel that can be heat-treated to a strength of 285,000 pounds per inch with sufficient ductility for structural applications. Developed by Samuel J. Rosenberg and Carolyn R. Irish of the bureau's thermal metallurgy laboratory, the steel is made by normal melting and working processes and should not be difficult to manufacture.

In recent years the increasing demand for reduced weight in aircraft structures has been a constant stimulus for the development of high-strength steels. One of the principal applications for such materials is in aircraft landing gears. Because landing gears constitute approximately 10 percent of the weight of an empty military plane, the use of an ultra-high-strength steel in such components can save considerable dead weight. Because of the urgent need for stronger steels in this particular application, the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics has sponsored an investigation at NBS to develop a steel having a tensile strength of approximately 300,000 pounds per inch.

Although many steels can be heat-treated to strengths of 300,000 pounds per inch and higher, they are normally quite brittle at this strength level. Such brittleness prohibits their use in structural applications where a certain amount of ductility and toughness is required. The present investigation therefore concentrated on developing a steel that would not only be strong but would also have high impact resistance.

New Missing Link Discovered

To zoologists the recently reported discovery by the Galathea Expedition of the extraordinary deep-sea mollusk *Neopilina galatheae* [H. Lemche, *Nature* (23 Feb. 1957)] will seem even more incredible than the famous discovery in recent times of *Latimeria,* the living coelacanth, even though the layman may see less of interest in the mollusk than in the fish. *Latimeria,* however, represents a group of fishes which survived into the Cretaceous period, and became extinct only some 70 to 90 million years ago; whereas the new-found mollusk represents a class that existed in the Cambrian to Devonian periods of the Paleozoic, and was supposed to have become extinct about 280 million years ago, when the coelacanths were just beginning to branch off as a special side-group of the other lobe-finned fishes (crossopterygians). *Latimeria,* moreover, seems to be a conventional sort of coelacanth, except for its salt-water habitat; but *Neopilina* is an obviously *segmented* mollusk, violating one of the general criteria by which mollusks are most readily known, their unsegmented body plan. *Neopilina,* of which 10 specimens and 3 additional shells were dredged up from a depth of 3590 meters off the west Mexican coast on 6 May 1952, has a fragile shell somewhat resembling that of a limpet, but there the similarity to any gastropod ends. The fossils of the class had already given evidence of symmetrically arranged pairs of shell muscles. The living animal exhibits segmentation in other significant features as well. There are five pairs of auricles that receive blood from the gills, one pair of auricles for each of the pairs of comblike gills (ctenidia). There are also paired excretory organs, nephridia, again one pair for each of the five segments of the mollusk's body. There may be other internal organs which are segmented in arrangement, but further study of the internal anatomy will be required to clarify such matters.

Neopilina represents a primitive form of mollusk intermediate between the amphineurans (chitons) and the cephalopods, but best placed, according to Lemche, in a distinct class, the Mono-