

to establish in the Congress a Joint Committee on Astronautics, and for other purposes. Fulton (R-Pa.). Select Committee on Astronautics and Space Exploration.

HR 11805. Promote the national defense by authorizing the construction of aeronautical research facilities by the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics necessary to the effective prosecution of aeronautical research. Kitchin (D-N.C.). House Armed Services.

HR 520. Provide for printing as a House document the statement entitled "Introduction to Outer Space." Arends (R-Ill.). House Administration.

HR 11838. Supplement the act of 3 July 1952 by providing for construction of a full-scale demonstration plant in Ventura County, Santa Barbara County, San Luis Obispo County, or Monterey County, Calif., for the production of fresh water from salt water. Teague (R-Calif.). House Interior and Insular Affairs.

News Briefs

The Soviet Government news agency Tass announced on 15 April that Sputnik II, which contained the carcass of a dog, had disintegrated that morning over the Lesser Antilles, Brazil, and the Atlantic Ocean. During the satellite's 5½ months in orbit (it was launched 3 November 1957) it had completed about 2370 trips around the world. It is said to have traveled about 62 million miles.

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Thirty-six governments have now submitted a total of 1925 titles of scientific papers for presentation at the Second International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, to be held in Geneva, 1-13 September, by the United Nations. Approximately 900 abstracts have been proposed for presentation by the United States.

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The inaugural meeting of the Indian Society for Plant Physiology was held on 24 January at the University of Allahabad, when the constitution of the society was adopted and officers were elected. The president is P. Parija, vice-chancellor of Utkal University, Cuttack. Kenneth V. Thimann, professor of botany at Harvard University, was elected an honorary member.

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A special summer laboratory course in the techniques and applications of the electron microscope will be offered to senior biologists and medical research workers at Cornell University from 16 June through 3 July. The course, which is under the direction of Benjamin M. Siegel, is being sponsored by a grant from the National Science Foundation.

Well-known guest lecturers will participate. Requests for information should be addressed to Siegel at Rockefeller Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.

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The Atomic Energy Commission has released information on 15 past nuclear explosions, revealing that at least seven explosions took place in the Pacific in 1954 and 1956 that never were announced. A list of seismological data on the 15 tests is being distributed by the Division of Earth Sciences, National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, Washington 25, D.C.

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The Experimental Boiling Water Reactor at Argonne National Laboratory of the Atomic Energy Commission, Lemont, Ill., was operated recently at a power level of 62,000 kilowatts of heat. This operating level is more than triple the original design operating level of 20,000 kilowatts. In December 1957 the EBWR was operated in experiments at 50,000 kilowatts of heat. The recent increase in the thermal output of the EBWR is a result of months of experimentation. Such an increase would increase the amount and reduce the unit cost of electricity produced by the plant if increased generating capacity were installed.

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A research team at the University of California's Radiation Laboratory has photographed the annihilation of an antineutron. This is considered the newest evidence of the great efficiency with which matter and antimatter destroy each other when they touch. Emilio Segrè announced the achievement on 11 April when he was lecturing at New York University.

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In only 4 years, world population grew by about 172 million. That equals the total population of the United States today. World population rose from 2.519 billion in 1951 to 2.691 billion in 1955, an increase of 118,000 persons each day.

The average annual rate of natural increase (excess of births over deaths) for the period was about 1.7 percent, the most rapid rate of growth in world history. These are a few of many highlights stressed in a recent United Nations report.

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State laws concerning private schools are reported in a new study, the first of its kind, by the U.S. Office of Education. A 152-page publication, *The State and Nonpublic Schools*, describes the legal framework within which these educational institutions operate and reports on the responsibilities of state departments of education in connection with them.

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Despite an increase in admissions, the population of this country's mental hos-

pitals continued to decline in 1957, according to a survey released recently by the American Psychiatric Association and the National Association for Mental Health. This is the second year of downturn in mental hospital rolls after a 25-year climb.

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The astronomy department of the University of California is organizing a conference for college teachers of astronomy between 7 July and 1 August. The conference will be sponsored jointly by the university and the National Science Foundation. The participants (limited to about 20 persons) will receive travel and living-expense allowances. Persons wishing to take part in the conference, which will be directed by Cecelia P. Gaposchkin of Harvard University, should write as soon as possible to the astronomy department of the University of California, Berkeley.

Scientists in the News

A memorial service honoring RUDOLPH MATAS, and the seventh presentation of the Rudolph Matas Award in vascular surgery, will be held on 9 May at the Tulane University School of Medicine. Dr. Matas, who died in September 1957 at the age of 97 years, served Tulane's department of surgery all of his adult life, becoming professor and head of the department in 1894.

The Matas award will be presented to JOHN H. GIBBON, JR., Samuel D. Gross professor of surgery and head of the department at Jefferson Medical College. He is being honored for his pioneering efforts in the field of extracorporeal circulation, which resulted in the development of a heart-lung apparatus.

HAROLD S. BLACK, research engineer for Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc., is to receive the 1957 Lamme Gold Medal of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers "For his many outstanding contributions to telecommunications and allied electronic arts, especially the negative feedback amplifier and the successful development and application of the negative feedback amplification principle." The medal will be presented to Black on 23 June during the summer general meeting of AIEE in Buffalo, N.Y.

RUSSELL GIBSON has left the United States to take up a year's assignment in Pakistan, where he will advise on the search for atomic raw materials under the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration. Among Gibson's duties will be the undertaking of a preliminary survey. He will advise Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission on a comprehensive program for an atomic