

The commission is being formed to:

1) Act as a consultative body in technical, economic, and administrative problems in nuclear science and technology.

2) Assist the member states in developing a coordinated plan for research and training in the nuclear sciences.

3) Upon request from the member states, assist in solving specific problems of nuclear energy programs.

4) Provide a channel for scientific communication. The commission plans to publish a bulletin that will report activities in the nuclear sciences in the Americas. Conferences will be organized and sponsored by the commission to exchange knowledge about the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

The commission will be made up of one representative, "familiar with the nuclear energy programs of his country," from each of the 21 OAS member nations and will be headed by a chairman and vice-chairman elected for 1-year terms. Its secretariat will form part of the staff of the Pan American Union. Jesse D. Perkinson, Jr., chief of the Division of Science Development of the Union, has been appointed executive secretary of the commission. Creation of the new body is a result of the recommendations of the Inter-American Committee of Presidential Representatives, which was led by Milton Eisenhower, president, Johns Hopkins University.

## Chinese Scientific Literature

The Lending Library Unit of Britain's Department of Scientific and Industrial Research has started to collect Chinese scientific literature. About 150 Chinese periodicals are now on regular order, and the first batch has arrived at the library's London premises (5-11 Regent St., London, SW 1).

Already the Lending Library Unit is noted for its large collection of Russian scientific literature, which is available to research, industrial, and other organizations. The library has also organized a scheme for translating Russian scientific literature in collaboration with the U.S. National Science Foundation. This project may possibly be extended in the future to include scientific literature from China. Meanwhile, the contents of these Chinese publications must be assessed, and a scientist with a knowledge of Chinese is being recruited by LLU to select and promote use of Chinese scientific and technological literature.

The Lending Library Unit in London is the nucleus of the new National Lending Library for Science and Technology, which will be set up at Thorp Arch, near Boston Spa, Yorks, in 1961.

## News Briefs

The first medical research contract to be placed by the International Atomic Energy Agency was awarded in May to the department of clinical therapeutics of the University of Athens. Investigations with radioisotopes are expected to help in the treatment of certain types of anemia and of echinococcosis, a parasitic disease which forms cysts in the lungs and liver. These disorders are common in Greece as well as in several other subtropical regions of the world.

The Smithsonian Optical Tracking Station at Woomera, Australia, has successfully photographed the Vanguard I earth satellite at the apogee of its orbit, nearly 2500 miles from the earth. No other object as small as this 6-inch sphere has been photographed from such a distance. The Woomera station is operated for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as a part of its world-wide network of tracking stations.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has formed a Committee on Long-Range Studies to deal with such nontechnical issues as the international, social, economic, and legal effects of space research and exploration. The committee's responsibilities center around that portion of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958 which calls for "studies of the . . . problems involved in the utilization of aeronautical and space activities for peaceful and scientific purposes." Chairman of the committee is John A. Johnson, NASA's general counsel, and the executive secretary is Jack C. Oppenheimer, formerly attorney adviser in the Office of the Solicitor, Department of the Interior.

More than 2000 research-minded undergraduates will be given an opportunity, beginning this summer, to participate in biological, physical, and engineering research directed by college and university faculty members under a grant program announced in May by the National Science Foundation. The foundation has allocated \$1,700,000 for the program to about 200 colleges and universities widely distributed throughout the nation. A list by states of the institutions to which grants have been made, and of the names of the directors, may be obtained from NSF, Washington 25, D.C.

The Soviet magazine *Ogonyok* has published a public apology to Norbert Wiener, the American mathematician, for the denunciation of him and his work in cybernetics by the Soviet press during the period of Stalin's rule. Cybernetics, a field which Wiener is gen-

erally regarded to have founded, was heavily ridiculed in Russia during the early postwar years, and Wiener was denounced as an "obscurantist." The author of the apology, essayist Marietta Shaginyan, said that public recognition of the error in regard to Wiener's work was necessary to assure that those responsible do not repeat their errors in the future.

The first mossy-throated bellbird ever seen alive in any zoo has gone on exhibition in the Bronx Zoo's bird house. The specimen is one of the greatest rarities in the bird world; the name comes from the black, moss-like strings of flesh that hang in a large patch on the bird's throat. The Bronx Zoo specimen was captured on 6 April in the mountains of northern Trinidad by William G. Conway, curator of birds.

In Canada, a \$600,000 contract for a design study of a new type of nuclear power reactor has been awarded to the Canadian General Electric Company, Limited. The reactor, known as OCDRE (Organic-cooled, Deuterium-moderated Reactor Experiment), is somewhat different from the type of nuclear reactor that Canada has developed to date; an organic liquid rather than heavy water is used to transfer heat from the uranium fuel to the steam generators. There has been a growing interest in the use of organic liquids as reactor coolants, for they cost about 40 cents a pound, compared to \$28 a pound for heavy water.

Twenty-six Southern California high-school juniors have been selected for an intensive 7-week summer course in science, mathematics, and satellite-tracking at the Thacher School near Ojai. The course—first of its kind in the West and extending from 23 June to 11 August—is being sponsored by California Institute of Technology, the Helms Foundation, the Hughes Aircraft Company, the Ralph B. Lloyd Foundation, and the Thacher School. Richard Sutton, director of relations with secondary schools at C.I.T., is chairman of the program's executive committee.

The Canadian Society of Plant Physiologists was founded last fall at a meeting in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The new society grew out of a series of annual research conferences on plant physiology that had been held at various Canadian universities and research institutions over a period of 8 years. The president of the new society is Paul R. Gorham. Correspondence should be addressed to the secretary-treasurer, D. Siminovitch, Chemistry Division, Canada Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, Canada.