

News Briefs

Messages from other worlds? This country's first systematic search for signals from intelligent beings on other planets began on 11 April with the start of Project Ozma, directed by Frank D. Drake of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, Green Bank, W. Va. The National Science Foundation reports that the 85-foot Howard Tatel memorial telescope will be used for the search, for as much as 6 hours each day. The two stars in our galaxy that are nearest the sun and that might have planets susceptible of sustaining life—Tau Ceta and Epsilon Eridani—are being observed during a month-long investigation. The research involves listening for signals. No facilities for transmitting signals are available.

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UNESCO arid lands meeting. A symposium on arid lands research will be held in Paris at UNESCO headquarters, 11–18 May. The UNESCO Advisory Committee on Arid Zone Research has recommended that the symposium be divided into the following parts: (i) critical appraisal of the state of knowledge; (ii) appraisal of UNESCO's activities; (iii) studies on selected problems illustrating difficulties in translating knowledge into action in arid zone development; and (iv) study of the prospects for future international and national action.

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Balloon-type satellite. An attempt will be made to launch a 100-foot inflatable sphere into orbit 1000 miles above the earth on 5 May, according to an announcement by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The communications experiment, Project Echo, has been scheduled so that the balloon-like sphere, made of highly reflective aluminum, will remain in continuous sunlight for about 2 weeks. No radio tracking beacon will be attached to the sphere. The third stage of the launching vehicle will carry a transmitter which will broadcast on 108.06 Mc/sec for 8 or 10 days, the expected lifetime of its batteries.

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Diploma mills. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has announced that it has started to compile a permanent list of "diploma mills" in this country as a warning not only to the public but also to gullible persons in other countries. Eleven of the 30 institutions named were found to be active in selling college degrees over-

seas. A "diploma mill" was defined as "an organization that awards degrees without requiring its students to meet educational standards for such degrees established and traditionally followed by reputable national institutions."

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Locust control. A cooperative drive to combat the desert locust began this month when 13 countries signed an agreement at the headquarters of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, putting in effect a 6-year project for locust control at a cost of more than \$3,800,000. Nineteen governments are cooperating in the initial stage, and others may join later. Beginning in May, locust swarms will be attacked by land and air in a large belt stretching from Morocco on the Atlantic Ocean to the Himalayas. The United Nations Special Fund, a new agency for long-range aid to less developed areas, is providing \$2,492,700 for the work. This is the largest contribution the agency has made to any individual project since it started operations 18 months ago.

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Univac programs convention. The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology used Remington Rand's Univac to program its 1960 convention, which was held in Chicago, 11–15 April. With the help of the machine, the 421-page abstract index, with its 2526 abstracts, was programmed in 2 minutes. The entire project required only 8 hours of Univac's time, whereas in the past as many as 1200 man-hours have been devoted to the task.

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Horticulture society. The International Society for Horticultural Science was formed at The Hague on 26 March. Eighteen member countries were represented at the meeting. The society will sponsor international gatherings on scientific horticulture, publish an information bulletin at irregular intervals, and publish the proceedings of international meetings. The next international congress will be held at Brussels in early September 1962. Officers of the society are A. Lecrenier of Belgium, president; H. B. Tukey, Michigan State University, vice-president; and G. de Bakker, the Netherlands, secretary-treasurer.

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Scintillator conference. An international Conference on Organic Scintillation Detectors will be held at the University of New Mexico, 15–17 August. The program, which is under the chair-

manship of E. Newton Hayes of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, will include a review of fundamentals and discussion of new advances and applications in biology, medicine, chemistry, physics, and industry. The general chairman of the conference is Guido H. Daub, Chemistry Department, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

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Tropical dermatology. A meeting to organize the International Society of Tropical Dermatology was held in January at the New York Academy of Medicine. Aldo Castellani of the Instituto de Medicina Tropical, Lisbon, was elected president. The inaugural meeting is scheduled for the evening of 10 May at the Rockefeller Institute in New York. Castellani will be the principal speaker. For information, write to the secretary-general, Frederick Reiss, 870 5th Ave., New York 21, N.Y.

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Soviet air-pollution research. *U.S.S.R. Literature on Air Pollution and Related Occupational Diseases*, the first volume of a survey that is being conducted by Ben S. Levine under a U.S. Public Health Service grant, has been released for sale to the public by the Office of Technical Services, Business and Defense Services Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. Levine's work is primarily for the benefit of the English-speaking scientist who wants information on Russian air-pollution research. The survey covers the basic concepts of air-pollution prevention in the U.S.S.R., explains the methods of approach, outlines the scope and plan of the work, and evaluates the progress made.

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Name changes at NYU. By joint action, the Board of Trustees of New York University and the NYU Medical Center Board have effected the following name changes. The name of the Medical Center is now: New York University Medical Center (formerly New York University–Bellevue Medical Center). The name of the College of Medicine has been changed to: New York University School of Medicine (formerly New York University College of Medicine). The center's affiliation with the Bellevue center will continue unchanged. The elimination of "Bellevue" in the center's title is to emphasize the fact that the center is an integral part of New York University, a private institution, rather than one which is municipally or state owned.