

build the dormitories necessary for these huge student bodies. University of California officials, like the university officials in most states, will be looking to the federal college housing loan program.

Unless liberalized, however, that program will support only a small part of the college housing needed over the coming decade. In speaking for the higher education groups before the Senate Housing Subcommittee, Mullins proposed that the entire \$820 million—not just \$300 million—to be realized from the sale this year of college housing bond participation certificates be made available for additional loans to the colleges.

An alternative proposal, also being considered by groups such as the American Council on Education and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, is to have the government guarantee the bonds sold by educational institutions in the private market and to provide that part of the interest payments exceeding 3 percent. Whether Congress and the administration will accept either of these proposals is not, at this point, an easy question.

According to William B. Ross, Deputy Undersecretary of HUD for policy analysis and program evaluation, the administration is intensely aware of the college housing shortage but has no new plan of action in hand. The problem is being studied with a view to developing proposals for consideration late this fall, when work on the fiscal 1968 budget will enter its final phase, Ross said. The proposals being discussed by the education groups are among the alternatives under review.

The House Banking and Currency Committee, which has jurisdiction over housing matters, recently reported an omnibus housing measure which makes no mention of college housing. However, there is at least a possibility that action to help the colleges will be initiated by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee and its Housing Subcommittee. The subcommittee was to have met this week, as *Science* was going to press, and the college housing problem was one of the matters expected to be taken up. A sympathetic interest in the colleges' problem is not lacking in Congress, but to say that that interest will be translated promptly into more housing loans would be only an optimistic guess.

—LUTHER J. CARTER

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **PROPOSAL WRITING:** The Research Institute for Science, a private firm located in Berkeley, offers assistance in writing grant proposals, at \$25 to \$100 a job—and administrators of some of the major granting agencies are frothing in anger. The "Institute" is a one-man enterprise headed by William D. Harris, who says he did similar work on the payroll of the University of California. Harris claims success for "several" clients and says he has "about 20 applications in the pipelines." One letter of solicitation from Harris says, in part, "Our review of your proposal . . . will greatly improve your chances of securing grants."

The intrusion of free-enterprise into the supposedly self-regulating grant system is not accepted with equanimity by NSF and NIH officials. "Any guy who can't write his own proposal doesn't deserve a grant," said one official who also expressed concern about how Congress might react to the implication that substance is not the all-governing factor in proposal evaluation. He added that agencies would not look kindly upon commercially prepared applications, but agreed that there is no easy way of determining who had prepared a form. The agencies say there is no objection to universities assisting their applicants, since this may be part of efforts to maintain "institutional harmony." They also say that they stand ready to offer assistance to applicants in filling out forms, but the existence of a commercial service, even a small one, suggests that the paperwork may be more of a burden than is publicly acknowledged.

● **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS TRAINING:** H.R. 14643, passed by the House 6 June, gives the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare authority to make grants to institutions to set up and maintain research and training centers in international studies, both at the graduate and at the undergraduate levels (*Science*, 1 April). A similar bill on education, introduced by Senator Wayne Morse (D-Ore.), is pending in the Subcommittee on Education, of which Morse is chairman. Hearings on the measure have not been scheduled and probably won't be held until late this summer.

● **HEALTH MANPOWER:** A non-government commission has been set up by the President to study health personnel problems in the U. S. The 15-member commission is headed by J. Irwin Miller, chairman of the board of Cummins Engine Company, Inc. Miller chaired a special Presidential committee last year that made the report on U.S. Trade Relations with Eastern European Countries and the Soviet Union. The Commission is charged with studying the health manpower situation and with submitting a report within a year suggesting methods for accelerating the education of health personnel and for improving utilization of the existing manpower pool. The commission has headquarters at the Office of Science and Technology in Washington and plans meetings throughout the year.

● **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE:** A bill extending coverage primarily to "blue collar" workers of institutions of higher education has been approved by the House Ways and Means Committee. Specifically exempted are faculty, research personnel, and many administrators. The bill (H.R. 15119) gives institutions of higher education and other nonprofit groups the option of either making regular state unemployment insurance contributions or reimbursing the state for unemployment compensation claims by their employees. The bill represents a compromise sought by nonprofit spokesmen (*Science*, 8 April).

● **SENATE APPOINTMENT:** Robert P. Griffin, appointed by Michigan Governor George W. Romney to succeed the late Senator Pat McNamara (D-Mich.), has been assigned to the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, which is the authorizing committee for legislation affecting education and medical research. Griffin, a Republican member of the House since 1956, was co-author in 1964 of the National Student Loan Program, National Defense Education Act.

● **FISH FLOUR:** The Senate has passed and sent to the House a bill (S. 2720) authorizing \$5 million for five government demonstration plants for fish protein concentrate research (*Science*, 6 May). The bill authorizes the Interior

Secretary to undertake feasibility studies of large-scale commercial production of the concentrate and to construct and maintain the experimental plants during a 5-year program. Similar measures have been introduced in the House and referred to the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, which has not yet scheduled hearings. The Interior Department, whose Bureau of Commercial Fisheries has conducted research on fish protein concentrate and submitted a product to challenge FDA's 1962 negative ruling on a commercial product, still awaits approval of its product. FDA has until the last of August to hand down a decision on the Interior product.

● **REUSS SUBCOMMITTEE:** The publication of an annual Science and Technology Report by the Executive Office of the President is among a series of proposals in a report issued by

the Research and Technical Programs Subcommittee of the House Government Operations Committee. The Committee report, "Federal research and development programs: The decision-making process," stems from hearings presided over in recent months by chairman Henry S. Reuss (D-Wis.) (*Science*, 14 January). Other recommendations include the use of cost-benefit analysis for major research and development proposals. Copies of the Reuss report may be obtained without charge from the Research and Technical Programs Subcommittee, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

● **THE WASHINGTON OFFICE:** An outpost in the Nation's capital is coming to be standard equipment for organizations or disciplines that have achieved or aspire to significant federal financial support. A few months ago, the Social Science Research Council

announced that it would reactivate a Washington office (*Science*, 20 May). Last week the opening of an office in the capital was announced by Associated Universities, Inc., the 9-university consortium that operates the Brookhaven National Laboratory and the National Radio Astronomy Observatory. AUI's Washington staff consists of T. Keith Glennan, AUI president; Lloyd E. Slater, his assistant, and a secretary. Other members of the staff will stay at the Brookhaven offices where financial administration is centered. A Washington office also has been established by the newly organized National Oceanography Association, among whose aims it is to "mobilize public support" of oceanography. The 18-member board of directors is headed by John H. Clotworthy, vice president, Defense and Space Center and general manager, Underseas Division, Westinghouse Electric Corporation in Baltimore.

REPORT FROM EUROPE

Total Synthesis of Insulin in Red China

London. Western attention is focusing, belatedly, on a major scientific project in mainland China: total synthesis of bovine insulin which possesses the full biological activity of natural insulin.

The existence of the project, which some Western scientists have visited recently, indicates that China is making a modest but significant effort in fundamental biochemistry.

The synthesis of the two chains of which insulin is composed, and their successful assembly into a complete and fully active molecule, was briefly reported in English last November [*Scientia Sinica* **14**, 1710 (1965)]. The announcement was signed by Kung Yueh-ting and 20 other research workers at the institutes of Biochemistry and Organic Chemistry, Academia Sinica, Shanghai, and the department of chemistry, Peking University.

Among the participants in the research were two scientists listed in a directory printed at the back of the recent National Science Foundation publication *Scientific and Engineering Manpower in Communist China, 1949-1963* (NSF publication 65-14). The scientists were Wang Yu, director of the Institute of Organic Chemistry, who received his doctorate from the University of Munich in the 1930's, and Niu Ching-i, a research associate in the Institute of Biochemistry, who received his doctorate from the University of Texas as recently as 1953.

Among those whose supervisory help is acknowledged are a number of scientists trained in the West: Wang Ying-lai, director of the Institute of Biochemistry, who received his doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1941; Tsao T'ien-chin (Ph.D. Cambridge, 1951) and Shen Chao-wen

(Ph.D. Toronto, 1943), both of the Institute of Biochemistry.

An article reviewing the achievement and, most importantly, giving the methods for purifying samples and for reliably linking the two chains to obtain full activity did not appear, however, until April [*Scientia Sinica* **15**, 544 (1966)]. This article, the latest of 18 which have appeared over the past 6 years in this English-language journal of the Academia Sinica (the Chinese equivalent of the Soviet Academy of Sciences), is only now reaching Western libraries.

It is already arousing considerable interest and comment among the many groups of scientists interested in the structure and function of proteins. The article was referred to briefly, for example, on 2 June at a Royal Society meeting on the structure and activity of immunoglobulins.

The first notice of this important project to appear in the popular press was an article in *Le Monde*, Paris, for 9 June. Although *Le Monde* did not say so, the appearance of the article was inspired by the presence in France of a delegation of scientists from mainland China. France and China have an agreement for the exchange of scientists. One of the scientists in the Chinese delegation was a member of the insulin-synthesis group.