

## Biology in Europe: Cooperation Grows

*Geneva.* The effort to win government financing for the promotion of molecular biology on a European basis is making definite progress. A draft constitution for a European Molecular Biology Conference made up of Western European governments was agreed upon at a meeting here late in January, and ratification is expected to follow fairly rapidly.

The new conference would underwrite the program of fellowships and summer courses now operated by the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO). EMBO's members are individual biologists elected according to scientific accomplishment, and EMBO fellowships and summer courses have until now been financed by Foundation grants. EMBO, however, has been seeking government support for its programs through creation of an intergovernmental organization modeled on the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN). The Geneva meeting was the latest of several meetings held here involving EMBO members and representatives of government science ministries.

No decision has been reached on the proposal for establishment of a European laboratory for research in molecular biology (*Science*, 2 June 1967). The question is expected to come up at later meetings.

Prospective member countries are in general those which belong to CERN: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Yugoslav and Polish representatives attended as observers.

No budget is mentioned in the draft, but expenditures starting at the present \$200,000-a-year budget figure and rising to \$1 million in 1971 have been discussed.—J.W.

administer, and any sort of means test has been regarded as political poison in Britain since the days of the dole in the 1930's. Free medicine has had a symbolic meaning for a particular generation of the Parliamentary Labor Party's left wing, and the charges were a main factor in the abstention of 25 Labor members in the House of Commons confidence vote on the cuts.

By deferring for 2 years the raising of the age for leaving secondary school, putting it off until 1973, the government expects to save £33 million this year and £48 million in 1969-70, principally in school construction costs. In announcing the cuts Prime Minister Harold Wilson applied some balm when he said that an extra £8 million would be spent in each of the 2 years so that comprehensive reorganization of the secondary schools "is not held up." Additional funds for priority areas in education were also promised.

Pains have obviously been taken to avoid cuts which would inhibit industrial modernization and economic growth. The Ministry of Technology's programs in support of the shipbuilding, computer, electronics, and machine-tool industries will go forward. Savings of £13 million this year and £15 million next year are planned, however. The Atomic Energy Authority will be

affected; cuts of £3 million for the AEA have already been announced. Details are not yet worked out, but it appears that cuts will be spread over R & D projects and should not affect reactor research, particularly fast-reactor development. The drop in AEA manpower is expected to continue.

University authorities are in a gloomy mood. The full effects remain to be assessed, but the 5-year financing program announced by the University Grants Committee about 2 months ago was a fairly austere one, and the Prime Minister brought no cheer when he announced that funds for capital construction at the universities this year are to be cut.

Basic research was not specifically mentioned in the Wilson message. The impression is that basic research has escaped the ax, but the Department of Education and Science, which is the main patron of fundamental research, seems to be waiting for the Treasury to release its yearly detailed estimates before commenting on how the research councils will fare.

Government silence on such major technological projects as the Channel tunnel, the Concorde supersonic transport, and the 300-Gev proton synchrotron for CERN (*Science*, 12 January) is intriguing. The clue may well be found

in Wilson's statement that Britain intends to "make to the alliances of which we are members a contribution related to our economic capability while recognizing that our security lies fundamentally in Europe and must be based on the North Atlantic alliance." Twenty years ago British withdrawal from India signaled the end of an imperial era. The last two decades have been for Britain a kind of epilogue to empire. But the recent change in military policy East of Suez is, in effect, the renunciation of a world role. The consensus here is that economic necessity has at last forced Britain to accept identity as a European power. A logical result of this new perspective would be a warmer government view of efforts to strengthen scientific and technical ties with Britain's European peers.—JOHN WALSH

## APPOINTMENTS

**John J. Procknow**, medical director and administrator of Barlow, a University of South Carolina affiliated hospital, to first Walter Jarvis Barlow professor of Chest Diseases in the department of medicine, in the university school of medicine. . . . **Ivan Tolstoy**, associate director of the Columbia University Hudson Laboratories, to professor of ocean engineering, Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Science. . . . **L. J. Haynes**, dean of the faculty of natural sciences, University of the West Indies, to president of the newly established Jamaican Association of Scientists. . . . **Lawrence Markus**, director of the Center for Controlled Sciences, University of Minnesota, to Nuffield visiting professor, Mathematics Research Centre of the University of Warwick, England. . . . **Gifford H. Symonds**, visiting professor of operations research, to visiting scholar at the Center for Research in Management Science, University of California, Berkeley. . . . **Hans W. Liepmann**, professor of aeronautics, California Institute of Technology's Graduate Aeronautical Laboratories, named as the first Dryden Research Lecturer by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. . . . **William P. Weiss**, assistant professor of pharmacology, George Washington University, to chief, program review and development division, District of Columbia Department of Health.