

includes funds for the training of prospective ecologists.

How the U.S. program compares with the programs of other nations is not completely clear, but the U.S. effort may well be the most ambitious, provided it gets off the ground. *Nature* commented in December that the "radical sweep" of the American integrated research programs "makes most of the efforts of other countries look very small beer." *Nature* suggested that in Britain and various "other countries" the IBP has merely "provided a new system for indexing research projects already in progress."

The U.S. program eventually became so divergent and unfocused that Ivan L. Bennett, Jr., deputy director of the Office of Science and Technology, warned the National Committee in January that it would have problems gaining the support of the President and Congress. "The last thing we can sell at the present time is the idea of surveys," Bennett said. "There's a strong feeling in some quarters that science has studied things to death, but what has come of it?" Some of the "selling" job may now be performed by the Daddario report, which emphasizes that the IBP deals with "one of the most crucial situations to face this or any other civilization—the immediate or near potential of man to damage, perhaps beyond repair, the ecological system of the planet on which all life depends." The report acknowledges that the IBP won't solve the myriad problems facing America, but it warns of "awesome" consequences if this nation fails to make a start on ecological problems. "It is not only a matter of learning. . . . It is a matter of survival," the report says.

The most serious problems of the IBP stem from the fact that no single organization is clearly in charge. The U.S. National Committee makes policy and coordinates the program, but it has no money to support research. The "power of the purse" remains with the regular granting agencies, and with a special Interagency Coordinating Committee that tries to coordinate support for major projects that are too costly to be funded by a single agency. The danger of this system is that projects considered important to the IBP might not seem important to any particular agency's mission, and the agencies, in effect, can veto IBP plans by refusing to fund them. Thus far the agencies have been notably unenthusiastic.

NEWS IN BRIEF

● MATHEMATICIANS' PROTEST:

At least two dozen American mathematicians and logicians have signed a statement asking information from the Soviet Embassy in Washington concerning the reported confinement to a mental hospital of a Soviet mathematician for his participation in a protest movement of Russian intellectuals.

The statement followed publication on 13 March of a New York *Times* report of the confinement of Aleksandr Yesenin-Volpin, a mathematician and poet, for his protest of the trial of four dissident Soviet intellectuals. The *Times* stated that 99 Russian mathematicians, including some members of the Academy of Sciences, had issued a formal protest of Yesenin-Volpin's confinement.

The inquiry to the Soviet Embassy expressed "great concern over the reports that he (Yesenin-Volpin) may have been subjected to pressure simply for expressing his views on public matters." The statement cited Yesenin-Volpin's "excellent mathematical work . . . and great integrity," and asked the Soviet Embassy to clarify the reports on Yesenin-Volpin's present status.

● **LAKE BAIKAL:** Scientists and conservationists in the Soviet Union are losing a battle to keep the world's largest freshwater lake, Lake Baikal, from becoming a cesspool, the New York *Times* has reported. Wastes from a woodpulp plant are currently being dumped in the Siberian lake and several more similar plants are planned for the area. Conservationists have battled for nearly a decade to preserve the lake which has a unique ecosystem and unusually cold and mineral-free waters. Among the species found only in Lake Baikal are the nerpa, a freshwater seal, and the golomyanka, a fish producing living young instead of eggs.

● **CYCLOTRON CONSORTIUM:** The University of Southern California, the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), and the University of California at Santa Barbara have formed a nuclear research and training consortium. The center of the consortium is a 50-Mev spiral ridge cyclotron at the UCLA cyclotron laboratory which is currently being enlarged through a \$411,000 grant from the University of

California regents and a \$450,000 grant from the Atomic Energy Commission. The regents also have approved the expenditure of \$4.8 million for the construction of a 150-Mev cyclotron.

● **NSF REVISION MEASURE:** A special subcommittee of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee has favorably reported a bill that would revise the National Science Foundation Act of 1950. The bill, S. 2598—the Senate version of H.R. 5404, a bill sponsored by Representative Emilio Q. Daddario (D-Conn.), which has passed the House—would authorize NSF to support research in the social sciences as well as applied research projects. It also calls for five new administrative positions in NSF.

● **ESTUARY LEGISLATION:** The House passed a bill (H.R. 25) authorizing \$1 million to finance a study and report by the Secretary of the Interior on the methods by which estuarine areas can be preserved and whether a national system of estuarine areas should be established. The House did not authorize federal acquisition of land, although the Secretary of the Interior was empowered to enter into agreements with states or localities for the permanent protection of estuarine areas which are now publicly owned. Under such agreements, the states or localities must share the costs of preservation of the lands "in an equitable manner."

● **NEGRO COLLEGE FUND:** Contributions to the United Negro College Fund in 1967 reached record levels in several communities that were torn by riots during the summer, the fund has reported. Among the areas where donations rose from the previous year were: Milwaukee, a 64.4 percent increase; Chicago, up 18.7 percent; Detroit, 14 percent; and northern New Jersey, 13.4 percent. The fund received \$4.6 million in contributions during 1967—a gain of more than \$600,000 over 1966. Corporate support accounted for 44 percent of the total. The contributions supported 33 private, regionally accredited, predominately Negro colleges and universities and scholarship programs for approximately 20,000 students.