

pression that, after the accident, luck was with the defenders. A northerly wind blew for nearly 2 months afterward, at a time of year when the wind normally blows from the southwest. Under normal conditions much more oil would have come ashore, instead of being blown out to sea. It even appears that if the bombing and the burning of oil aboard the *Torrey Canyon* had been done earlier, a lot of unburned residue would have ended up on the beaches. The immediate costs of the wreck to Britain (estimated at £3 million), the setback to the tourist industry, and the damage to coastal ecology all could have been devastatingly increased if even half the oil in the *Torrey Canyon's* tanks had come ashore.

#### Research Needed

The recommendations of both reports follow logically from the *Torrey Canyon* ordeal. The Zuckerman committee asks that better means be developed for transferring cargo from disabled tankers and for destroying or dispersing oil at sea. Detergents should be used judiciously, and less toxic detergents should be developed, both reports agree. And more research needs to be done on the neglected questions of the effects of pollution on marine life and ways of minimizing these effects.

Chances for a more effective government response in future crises have probably been enhanced by the decision, late last year, of the House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology to form a subcommittee on coastal pollution. This subcommittee, the first formed by the parent committee, is looking into all aspects of the problems raised by the *Torrey Canyon* episode and should eventually make recommendations for across-the-board action in future disasters.

And the odds are that there will be other *Torrey Canyons*. Some 10 percent of world's shipping accidents occur in Britain's heavily trafficked coastal waters. And tankers are getting bigger. The 210,000-ton Japanese supertanker *Idemitsu Maru*, for example, dwarfs the *Torrey Canyon*. And within a few years tankers of a half-million tons deadweight may be plying the seas.

The Plymouth Laboratories scientists say in summing up, "We are progressively making a slum of nature and may eventually find that we are enjoying the benefit of science and industry under conditions which no civilized society should tolerate."—JOHN WALSH

## NEWS IN BRIEF

● **FUND DRIVES:** Carnegie-Mellon University has begun a 3-year, \$55-million fund drive aimed at strengthening the university's academic and research programs. Objectives of the drive include the establishment of a Graduate School of Urban and Public Affairs, a College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and supplementary programs in engineering and the sciences. To date the university has raised about \$20 million of its goal, including a \$10-million gift from Richard King Mellon for the proposed Graduate School of Urban and Public Affairs. Rice University, which will end a 3-year, \$33-million campaign in December, has been awarded a \$1-million Ford Foundation grant for development of its undergraduate and graduate social sciences programs. The Ford grant, however, will not be counted toward the \$33-million goal, of which \$26 million has been obtained to date. The \$33-million drive is for funds to be used by Rice over a 4-year period to add 15 faculty members, provide 70 graduate fellowships, create summer recruitment sessions, and finance social science research.

● **VIETNAM PEACE PETITION:** Seven hundred and fifty scholars, scientists, and writers—including 25 Nobel laureates, 10 Pulitzer Prize winners, and 160 members of the National Academy of Sciences—have signed a statement urging a Vietnam settlement "based on meaningful mutual accommodations with those Vietnamese now opposing politically and militarily the present Saigon regime." The statement, which was published as an advertisement in the *Washington Post* on 7 April, adds, "Social and political stability cannot be attained without active participation of all significant elements of the Vietnamese people, including the N.L.F., in the Government of South Vietnam. . . ." All who signed the statement are Fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences or the American Philosophical Society.

● **ROTTERDAM MEDICAL SCHOOL:** The Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University, has been awarded a \$108,000 grant by the Commonwealth Fund to develop a cooperative program with the Rotterdam Faculty of Medicine in the Netherlands. The grant, which was made on the condition

that it be matched equally by the Dutch government, provides support for 3 years to assist the Dutch institution in developing competence in the basic medical sciences. The school was founded by the Dutch parliament and opened in 1966. Its curriculum differs considerably from that of traditional European universities, featuring intensive laboratory experience, opportunities for students to select their subjects, and substantial student exposure to patients.

● **FISH PROTEIN:** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has declined to hold a hearing on its order permitting domestic distribution of whole fish protein concentrate for food, even though it received nearly 100 objections to the order. According to the FDA, most of the objections were submitted by "dairy interests." The FDA said the objections were not supported "by grounds legally sufficient" to justify a hearing.

● **NEW NARCOTICS BUREAU:** The Bureau of Narcotics in the Treasury Department and the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control in the Food and Drug Administration of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare were merged into a new bureau on 8 April. The new organization, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, will be part of the Justice Department.

● **INTERNATIONAL ENGINEERING ORGANIZATION:** The World Federation of Engineering Organizations was formed in early March when representatives of the engineering profession in 60 countries met in Paris. Objects of the new organization are "to advance engineering as a profession in the interest of the world community; to foster cooperation between engineering organizations throughout the world; and to undertake special projects by cooperation between member organizations and in cooperation with other international bodies." The federation will be made up of national members representing the engineering profession in participating countries, and international members representing regional federations of engineering societies. A Swiss engineer, Eric Choisy, was elected president of the federation. The next general assembly of the organization will be in Beirut, Lebanon, in October 1969.