

NEWS IN BRIEF

• TRUMAN NAMED MOUNT HOLYOKE PRESIDENT:

David B. Truman has resigned as vice president and provost of Columbia University to become president of Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass. Truman, who has filled Columbia University's second highest administrative post since June 1967, was formerly dean of Columbia College and has been at Columbia for 19 years. He was a central figure in the student-administration confrontations, which occurred at Columbia last spring (see *Science*, 22 Nov.). Truman will assume on 1 July 1969, his duties as president of Mount Holyoke, a woman's college with 1800 students.

• EDUCATION UNDER THE GI BILL:

More than a half million veterans are now enrolled in education and training programs under the "Post-Korean GI Bill" and nearly 325,000 of these are involved in college-level programs. A Veterans Administration (VA) report shows that nearly 1 million, or about 20 percent, of all recent veterans have received some educational benefits under the present GI bill, which became effective 1 June 1966. VA officials told *Science* that the percentage of veterans expected to seek educational benefits under the present bill will probably approach 50 percent, as was the case with both World War II and Korean War veterans. Under the present bill, servicemen are eligible for educational benefits for 8 years after they terminate their service. The 325,000 veterans now enrolled in college-level programs constitute slightly more than 5 percent of the 6 million students estimated in higher education last fall.

• **CRIME RESEARCH GRANTS:** The Justice Department has announced "Exercise Acorn," a small grants program to encourage new ideas in research and development in broad areas of crime prevention, crime control, and the administration of justice. The recently established National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice within the Justice Department plans to award about 50 grants, not exceeding \$5000 each, to scientists, scholars, and other professionals interested in research in such areas as the reduction of crime, the improvement of law enforcement services, courts, and correctional institutions, including parole and probation agencies. There are no spe-

cific eligibility requirements for grant applicants. Institutional and individual project proposals may be submitted to Ralph G. H. Siu, Director, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. 20530.

• **POWER PLANT PERIL:** An inter-agency report, which calls for advance planning in choosing power plant sites, warns that an estimated 250 huge new power plants needed to fulfill the nation's future power demands by 1990, could constitute a serious peril to the nation's air and water supply. *Considerations Affecting Steam Power Plant Site Selection*, which was prepared by the Office of Science and Technology, calls for scientific and engineering developments to reduce danger from thermal pollution, radiation contamination, and other potential pollution hazards; it may be obtained for \$1.25 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office.

• FEDERAL RAT CONTROL GRANTS:

The final grants to cities for rat control pilot studies have been announced by Wilbur J. Cohen, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. The grants were provided by Congress on second thought after it defeated the President's Rat Bill in 1967. The Partnership for Health Act provided a total of \$15 million to 14 urban areas which were selected to pose a variety of rat control problems. The federal grants are supplemented by almost \$6 million in matching funds. The projects will be evaluated at the end of 1969, and the experience derived will be made available for use in the rest of the 130 major cities in the country.

• ARS ANIMAL RESEARCH CENTER:

A \$2.7-million National Meat Animal Research Center is being established by the Agriculture Research Service (ARS) in Clay Center, Neb., to coordinate all new ARS research efforts in livestock breeding and management. The purpose of the center, which will support about 240 specialists, will be to conduct new ARS basic and applied research programs in the feeding, breeding, and genetics of livestock and meat production; to study how animal wastes contribute to water pollution; and to continue research conducted formerly at ARS regional centers.

reality behind the UFO mystery. But Condon and the Academy panel, noting that UFO cases tend to be explicable in conventional terms when enough data are available, disagree. The Academy panel asserts that, "while some incidents have no positive identification with familiar phenomena, they also have no positive identification with extraterrestrial visitors or artifacts." It adds that, while some UFO sightings are not easily explained, the Condon report suggests "so many reasonable and possible directions in which an explanation may be found that there seems to be no reason to attribute them to an extraterrestrial source without evidence that is much more convincing."

The Condon report emphatically asserts that there is no evidence of a government conspiracy to hush up the truth about flying saucers. "We have no evidence of secrecy concerning UFO reports," Condon states. "What has been mis-called secrecy has been no more than an intelligent policy of delay in releasing data so that the public does not become confused by premature publication of incomplete studies of reports."

In the past, however, there was considerable official secrecy, for up to 1960 UFO reports were handled as classified information. Condon believes this secrecy did much to fuel the UFO controversy, for it allowed dark suspicions to take root, and it fostered sensationalized commercial exploitation of the idea that the government knew much about UFO's that it was concealing. "Had responsible press, magazine writers, and scientists been called in and given the full story . . . they would have seen for themselves how small was the sum of all the evidence and in particular how totally lacking in positive support was the ETH [extraterrestrial hypothesis] idea," Condon says.

Whether the Condon report will ultimately quiet the UFO controversy remains to be seen, but the criticisms already stirred up by the Colorado project serve as a reminder that scientific methods are not always able to resolve problems in fields where emotions run high and data are scarce. Meanwhile, a Nobel prize probably awaits the first scientist who conclusively demonstrates that UFO's really are vehicles from another world. As Condon notes, this would be "the greatest single scientific discovery in the history of mankind."

—PHILIP M. BOFFEY