NEWS IN BRIEF

• **HANDLER ELECTED**: Philip Handler, chairman of the National Science Board and professor of biochemistry at Duke University, has been elected President of the National Academy of Sciences. He was unopposed.

• **SOBELL FREED**: Morton Sobell, an electrical engineer convicted in 1951 with Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for allegedly aiding in the conspiracy to transmit atomic secrets to the Soviet Union, was released on 14 January, after serving almost 18 years of a 30-year term. The efforts to bring about Sobell's release on grounds that the evidence was flimsy and that the lengthy sentence was generated by Cold War emotion (see *Science*, 23 Sept. 1966), sparked the raising of funds estimated at nearly $1 million for legal action. Sobell was released not because of court action, but because his sentence was reduced for good behavior.

• **PRINCETON AGREES TO COEDUCATION**: The Board of Trustees of Princeton University has approved, in principle, coeducation for the 223-year-old school. Robert Goheen, Princeton's president, said that no date or specific plan for admitting women will be announced until late spring. Princeton, which has an undergraduate enrollment of about 3200, is expected to provide for an additional 1000 women undergraduates. In making the decision, the trustees said that Princeton's noncoeducational status has been hurting it in admissions.

• **GIFT TO GEOLOGICAL OBSERVATORY**: A gift of $7 million—one of the largest single gifts in Columbia University's 215 year history—has been given to the Lamont Geological Observatory in Palisades, N.Y., by the Henry L. and Grace Doherty Charitable Foundation. The gift will be used to stabilize the salaries of research scientists who do not have academic appointments and have been dependent in the past on federal grants for their subsistence; it will also be used for the enlargement of research opportunities. (It is estimated that nearly a half of the Observatory's research funds are devoted to oceanography; about 40 percent of its budget is spent on seismology and earth research; about 10 percent is earmarked for space physics and planetary sciences.) The name of the 20-year-old observatory will be changed to the Lamont-Doherty Geological Observatory in honor of Doherty, who was a businessman in the gas, oil, and electric industries. The Observatory has an annual operating budget of $9 million, about $7.9 million of which consists of federal grants and contracts (about $3.9 million of these are Defense Department contracts.)

• **EARTHQUAKE RESEARCH PROPOSAL**: A federal report recommending research to reduce the potential losses resulting from earthquakes has been released by the Office of Science and Technology. Unlike a 1965 interagency report (*Science*, 15 Oct. 1965), which dealt primarily with earthquake prediction, the present report discusses research on the prevention and minimization of potential earthquake damage through engineering devices, better land use, and subsurface stress relief attempts. The report recommends that the government fund an earthquake hazards study program for a 10-year period at a total cost of $220 million. *Proposal for a Ten-Year National Earthquake Hazards Program* may be obtained for $3 from the Clearinghouse for Scientific and Technical Information, Springfield, Virginia.

• **OE STUDENT PARTICIPATION**: The Office of Education (OE) is moving ahead in efforts to give college students a voice in educational programs that affect them. OE officials recently told *Science* that four OE advisory groups have already appointed student representatives and that 11 such groups are in the process of adding student members. Five students now serve on advisory groups for graduate education, the teacher corps, vocational education, and student financial aid. OE plans to pay their expenses to Washington several times a year for conferences, seminars, and the advisory group meetings. Pending the new commissioner's approval, the program will also include an informal student advisory group, which would provide OE with a sampling of student opinions on other educational issues. The new program will also seek to expand and improve OE's present summer intern program, which now involves some 300 college students in OE projects.

developing. John Middleton, director of HEW's National Center for Air Pollution Control, has said his agency will have a prototype steam vehicle ready in 5 to 8 years. Lear promises to have steam vehicles on the market in about a year and a half. "The government is finally beginning to realize that we may have something," Lear says, "but so far there has been no official interest expressed."

Lear has bid on the Highway Patrol program. But he is not alone. Thermodynamic Systems has also bid, and that company has a complete engine system already built. Although D. S. Leuthje, inspector at the Highway Patrol and head of the steam program, said recently that he would probably select one steam engine maker for all six engines, it may be that both Lear and the Thermodynamic Systems people will participate in the program.

Both engine systems, their developers claim, have completely eliminated all the problems formerly associated with steam. Both use a working fluid of water mixed with soluble oil (5 percent) to solve freezing and lubrication problems. Both systems will be lighter than the present automotive engine systems and will occupy about the same amount of space as present systems. Kerosene, diesel oil, gasoline, or paint thinner can be used as fuel; any of these will provide about as many miles per gallon as gasoline does in today's cars, the developers claim.

R. G. Smith, the vice-president of Thermodynamic Systems, told *Science* that his company was not planning to produce steam cars. They will begin to produce steam engines (about 25 to 30 a month) in February, Smith said, and are interested in other applications, such as helicopters, stationary power plants, boats, and airplanes. "We just don't have the kind of money that is needed to fight Detroit," Smith said. But it seems that Lear does have the money and the interest to do just that.

Lear's engineers were trying to complete the engine system by this month. With his flair for the dramatic, Lear plans an unveiling of his racing car and of a prototype passenger car in mid-February. The two cars will have the same basic engine, but the racer's will probably be larger, to produce greater speeds. The engine has three crankshafts arranged in a triangle, with six cylinders and 12 pistons. As in all steam systems, there is no transmission. Lear says his system will start in 20 seconds at 20 degrees below zero. The