

calcium physiology, DDT (and its metabolite DDE) was responsible for the avian reproduction failures that had so mystified them, though experimental evidence of this was lacking.

Lucille Stickel, pesticide research coordinator of the Department of the Interior's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, in testifying for EDF, has now furnished experimental proof that the presence of small quantities of DDT and DDE in the diets of mallard ducks decreased eggshell thickness, increased egg breakage, and decreased overall reproductive success. Similar results were obtained from an experiment in which kestrels, a species closely related to the peregrine falcon, were fed low dosages of DDT and dieldrin in combination, Mrs. Stickel said.

Another EDF witness, Richard Welch, a biochemical pharmacologist with the Burroughs Wellcome Research Laboratory, said that, if one extrapolates from animal data, the prediction would be that DDT would have a biochemical effect on man causing an increase in the metabolism of hormones and drugs. In questioning Welch, Yannacone's purpose was, partly, to stress that the entire world population is presently being used as the involuntary subject of an uncontrolled experiment.

Defense not Yet Heard

The agricultural chemical industry is yet to be heard from and it may be that the Department of Natural Resources will find the industry's defense persuasive. Medical experts will be invited to testify, and other scientists with special knowledge of pesticides surely will appear in the industry's behalf. Certainly EDF is still a long way from having won its case, for, even if the department decides in its favor, the industry would no doubt appeal to the courts.

But, whatever else may be said, the Wisconsin hearings are a striking instance of local conservation groups using a legal forum to deal with what they judge to be a major environmental problem. Just as striking is the fact that a state government is providing that forum, though Wisconsin has more of a progressive tradition than most states. Further, the role of the Environmental Defense Fund in the DDT case clearly has been a key one and, had there been no such organization, it seems altogether possible that nothing would have happened.

—LUTHER J. CARTER

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **NIXON DIRECTIVES:** President Nixon last week ordered the Department of Defense (DOD) to prepare plans for ending the draft. He also questioned the NSF cuts in government grants to colleges and universities, and called for a restudy of the supersonic transport (SST). Nixon asked DOD to develop a plan for replacing the draft with an all volunteer Army after expenditures in Vietnam had been substantially reduced. He told the Bureau of the Budget that he is "disturbed" over the NSF grant reductions which resulted from the spending ceiling imposed by Congress. Nixon's draft directive is interpreted as action-oriented, whereas the other two directives were described as efforts to elicit information and advice, which may or may not prompt action.

● **NEW NIXON APPOINTEES:** President Nixon has named James E. Allen, Jr., New York State's Educational Commissioner since 1955 and a pronounced advocate of school desegregation, to take over two previously separate positions—U.S. Commissioner of Education, and Assistant Secretary for Education in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). Michigan State University President John A. Hannah was selected to head the Agency for International Development program. Last week, Nixon also named Gerard C. Smith, a former assistant secretary of state, to be director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

● **AIR POLLUTION CURB:** For the first time the Interior Department is allowing reprocessing of imported high sulfur fuel in the United States in an effort to reduce air pollution. On 9 January the department granted three U.S. firms permission to import specified quantities of high sulfur fuel oil and to convert it into low sulfur fuels which comply with stricter air pollution control regulations. Previously, imported residual fuel oils could only be sold in their imported state; there was no permission for further processing or desulfurizing in the United States.

● **UDALL HEADS CONSERVATION GROUP:** Former Interior Secretary Stewart Udall has announced that he will serve as chairman of the board of The Overview Group, a new private

consulting corporation, which will advise on conservation problems. Udall says that Overview, initially financed by its major officers, will not engage in basic research, but will seek to advise government, industry, institutions and private organizations on environmental problems, including the elimination of pollution, and the redevelopment of urban and rural areas. Henry Kimelman, a former assistant to Secretary Udall, will serve as president.

● **ABM SITE SELECTION SUIT:** A suit has been filed by Chicago area residents to prevent the Army from constructing an ABM missile site near Libertyville, Illinois. The Justice Department told *Science* that the suit filed on 17 January with the U.S. District Court in Chicago is the first private suit in connection with the controversial Sentinel Antiballistic Missile System (ABM). Plaintiffs, including members of the Northern Illinois Citizens Against ABM contest the missile installation for safety reasons. Local opposition to ABM installations has also been reported in Boston, Seattle, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and other cities.

● **YALE, DARTMOUTH LIMIT ROTC:** Faculty members of Yale University and of Dartmouth College have voted to reduce the academic status of Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) on their campuses. At Yale, the faculty recommended that no academic credit be given for ROTC, that ROTC be considered an extracurricular activity, and that ROTC instructors not have the customary rank of "professor." At Dartmouth, it was suggested that ROTC credits be phased out over a 3-year period. Faculty proposals at both institutions are recommendations, and they require formal approval by each school's board of trustees.

● **NEW PUBLICATIONS:** *IBRO Survey of Research Facilities and Manpower in Brain Sciences in the United States*, an NAS-NRC survey on research interests in basic brain sciences, which was sponsored by the International Brain Research Organization, is available at no cost from the NAS-NRC Committee on Brain Sciences, 2101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20418.