

was postponed, and BAC and Sud fell to scrapping over which side had fallen behind in supplying parts.

At that point, the British made an effort to get the French to agree on a cost ceiling for the project. A figure has reportedly been arrived at; the amount has not been announced, though it has been announced that the total cost is now foreseen at \$1.7 billion. This inspired the *Economist* to charge that Europe is putting "its precious resources into a project that posterity may point to as the biggest technological boob of its generation."

In any case, the first plane off each

of the assembly lines has been successfully flown, though it will be many months before supersonic speeds are attempted. BAC and Sud report that all is going well, but with Concorde's critics looking for new reasons to cancel the project, the two firms have announced, "It is the intention of the manufacturers to provide progress information, but they do not feel that this should degenerate into a list of transient headaches of the day. . . . There will be many . . . problems—all of them capable of being dramatised, and all of them, the manufacturers are confident, capable of being overcome

by the normal engineering processes."

To show the public what it has been paying for, the two companies recently sent their Concorde's roaring low over London and Paris—and it was indeed a spectacular sight. On this occasion, those who contend that pride and prestige must be calculated among the payoffs from national investment in advanced technology would have been heartened by an incident on a London street. A car-wash worker looked up as the Concorde, preceded by a flight of jet fighters, roared past. "At least it shows the British can do something right," he said.—D. S. GREENBERG

Narcotics and Drug Abuse: A Presidential Prescription

President Nixon last week asked Congress to counter the "serious national threat" of narcotics addiction and drug abuse with a ten-point program which includes a rewriting of existing narcotics and dangerous-drug legislation. The Administration proposals stress control measures and received a generally cool reception from those who are particularly concerned with narcotics and drug research and education and the rehabilitation of addicts.

The President's message to Congress called the proposals "initial counter-moves against this growing national problem," so initiatives for research and education may be coming along later, but the Administration's first actions in the field follow a federal tradition of placing heavy emphasis on enforcement.

In one sense, the Administration is asking for an inevitable tidying up of an assortment of narcotics and drug laws enacted over the past half century. The new comprehensive law put forward by the Administration is a logical follow-up to the consolidation of narcotics and dangerous-drug enforcement authority in a single agency (*Science*, 13 December 1968), the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, in the Justice Department.*

Work on an "omnibus" narcotics and drug law, in fact, was well under way

during the last year of the Johnson Administration and rumblings of disapproval over the way things seemed to be going were audible from the community concerned with research and education in the field. General misgivings were expressed that the new omnibus bill being fashioned in the Justice Department would extend the traditional enforcement approach which has emphasized a rigid control of supplies of narcotics and resulted in serious difficulties for scientific investigators in obtaining and using drugs for research.

Concern was centered particularly on marihuana because the very rapidly increasing use of marihuana, especially by young people, comes at a time when there is relatively little scientific data on the effects of use of marihuana. Researchers contend that, because of federal laws which have classed marihuana with hard narcotics, research on marihuana has been seriously inhibited.

In his message, the President calls for a number of measures to help suppress international and domestic trafficking in drugs, proposes a model

* Laws dealing with hard narcotics such as heroin and other opiates and marihuana were formerly enforced by the Bureau of Narcotics in the Treasury Department, and the Bureau of Drug Abuse Control in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare handled enforcement of laws affecting psychotoxic drugs, such as the amphetamines and barbiturates, and most hallucinogenic drugs.

state drug law to complement revised federal legislation, asks the Attorney General and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to develop an improved education program on narcotics and dangerous drugs and promises training and aid to embattled local law-enforcement authorities.

The Administration's draft bill is primarily an effort to synthesize existing legislation, but there are significant changes. Some specific penalties are increased. For a first offender convicted of selling LSD, for example, the current 5-year sentence would be changed to a 5- to 20-year term. Instead of the present 1-year term for conviction on a charge of possession of LSD, the bill calls for 2 to 10 years.

The Attorney General also asked Congress to amend a law recently invalidated by the Supreme Court. The amendment is designed to meet the court's objections to what it termed self-incriminating features of federal laws which require persons handling narcotics and marihuana to be registered. The Court found a section of the Internal Revenue Code unconstitutional after considering an appeal on a case involving the conviction on a marihuana charge of hallucinogenic-drug champion Timothy Leary.

Questions about a potential violation of civil liberties have also been raised about the draft bill's provision of "no-knock" warrants which would permit agents to enter and search premises if, in the words of the statement from the Attorney General's office, "the official issuing the warrant is satisfied that there is probable cause to believe that the property sought may be quickly and easily destroyed or disposed of."

Probably the most important structural change embodied in the bill is

Seminar for Science Policy Group

About 100 people met in Washington last week for the first special symposium organized for university researchers by the Science and Public Policy Studies Group. The 3-day meeting was devoted largely to appearances by representatives of public agencies with science policy interests and gave the visitors opportunities for off-the-record, off-the-cuff discussions with federal officials.

The idea of the Science and Public Policy Studies Group grew out of a symposium and workshop meetings at the AAAS meeting in 1967 for persons who were actively engaged in teaching or research programs in science policy studies, or were contemplating such work. The group was organized formally in 1968 to provide a national focus for academic studies in the science policy field, to organize symposia, and to serve as a clearinghouse for information. A small office was set up at M.I.T. under the supervision of professors Eugene B. Skolnikoff and Harvey M. Sapolsky.

So far, about 90 institutions have become affiliated with the group. Support for the group's activities has come from a grant from the Sloan Foundation, and contributions of \$1000 a year each have come from 15 of the university affiliates.

Last week's meeting was the first major independent venture by the organization and the first of a planned series of Washington seminars. On Wednesday and Thursday the participants met at the National Academy of Sciences building and heard officials of the academies of Sciences and of Engineering, the National Science Foundation, and the Office of Science and Technology. On Friday they traveled to Capitol Hill to meet with congressional aides and staff of the Library of Congress.—J.W.

the creation of four major categories or "schedules" of drugs. Schedule I includes substances which have no approved medical use, including heroin, marihuana, and LSD. The other most legally sensitive schedule includes drugs which are medically important but have a potential for abuse, such as amphetamines and barbiturates. The idea, according to the Attorney General's memo, is that "These classifications are based on the most current knowledge regarding the relative dangers of the substances, the patterns of abuse, and the extent of legitimate medical and industrial uses which exist for them. In this fashion both penal and regulatory controls can be applied with appropriate degrees of severity."

Some critics argue that the lumping of heroin, marihuana, and hallucinogenic drugs in the same schedule may lead to the application of a single, harsh, punitive standard in dealing with those charged with offenses involving any of the Schedule I substances. The Attorney General's memo says it is necessary to "retain sufficient flexibility to rehabilitate the unfortunate victims of drug abuse and addiction, and distin-

guish hard-core criminals and misinformed abusers." And the memo goes on to say that Congress faces a sensitive task in determining an "optimum sentence structure." But there has been no clear reflection in the Administration statements that a significant portion of the public makes a definite distinction in their feelings about the seriousness of use, respectively, of hard narcotics, synthetic hallucinogenics, like LSD, and marihuana.

Ahead lies congressional action on the Administration program. Narcotics and dangerous-drug legislation has never roused partisan passions and there seems little prospect of a division on party lines this time. There is, however, more likelihood of a debate on fundamentals than at any time in the past. Already bills have been introduced which embody alternative sets of priorities. Senator Thomas Dodd (D-Conn.) is author of a bill which anticipated the Administration bill in unifying narcotics and dangerous-drug laws to concentrate authority in the Justice Department. The Dodd bill, however, puts more stress on collaboration with HEW in research and educa-

tion. [President Nixon, in his message, did call for increased effort on research on drug abuse by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) in HEW, but no specifics were mentioned.]

Just as Dodd's bill reflects an interaction with the Justice Department in its drafting, a bill introduced in the House by Representative Harley O. Staggers, chairman of the House Commerce Committee, bears the mark of NIMH collaboration. The bill would put broad responsibility for research, education, and training specialized manpower in HEW and give HEW a strong voice in designating drugs which have potential for abuse and in other policy matters.

The change in the enforcement machinery for narcotics and dangerous-drug laws has resulted in jurisdictional uncertainties which are sure to result in skirmishes between executive agencies and congressional committees. But wide public concern about the "drug problem" and particularly about marihuana has kindled in Congress a new interest and a relatively empirical attitude. This attitude is manifested, for example, in the bill introduced by Senator Frank E. Moss (D-Utah) establishing a Presidential Commission "to study the legal, social and medical questions arising out of the growing use of marihuana in our country."

In a statement discussing the need for such a commission in the 10 July *Congressional Record*, Moss deplored the inconclusiveness of scientific information available on marihuana, but said a start should be made in pulling together and evaluating what is known. And concluding his statement he said, "We should also take a look at our present laws on marihuana. Are they realistic? Are they too severe, or not severe enough? Should the courts differentiate in the handling of the occasional user, the frequent user and the chronic user, and the person who shares his drug with another person and the dealer who sells for a profit?"

"The widespread use of marihuana, particularly among college students, has been accompanied by increasing support among some groups for legalization. Other critics of the law, while not supporting legalization, take the position that marihuana should be classed with the hallucinogens controlled by the Drug Abuse Act, which provides far less severe penalties for violations, and no penalty for possession. Who is right?"—JOHN WALSH