

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **AIR POLLUTION TOP TEN:** Preliminary air pollution rankings recently released by the National Pollution Control Administration show Steubenville, Ohio, as the dirtiest city, and New York City air as the most fouled with corrosive sulfur oxides. The top ten in particulate pollution (dirt, smoke, and soot) for 1970 are: Steubenville; Charleston, West Va.; Scranton, Pa.; Niagara Frontier, N.Y.; Bakersfield, Calif., and Syracuse, N.Y. (tie); Johnstown, Pa.; Louisville, Ky.; Milwaukee, Wis.; and Pittsburgh, Pa. The top ten in sulfur oxide levels were: New York City; Chicago; Huntington, West Va.; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; Cleveland and St. Louis (tie); Washington, D.C.; Detroit; and Providence, R.I.

● **MENTOR PROGRAM:** The American Mathematical Society (AMS) has begun a tutoring program to aid graduate students who are in the Army, in jail, or doing alternative service. The Mentor Program currently includes about 200 students and 75 mentors. The program began last fall, and participation is being solicited from mathematicians and other professional societies. Information can be obtained from AMS at P.O. Box 6248, Providence, Rhode Island 02904.

● **CANADA CURBS DETERGENTS:** Canada has banned the manufacture of laundry detergents containing more than 20 percent phosphates. Phosphates, used in detergents to increase cleaning power, were recently found to be the key factor in the growth of algae in the Great Lakes by the International Joint Commission, a U.S.-Canadian scientific body, which urged cooperation in cleaning up the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River.

● **WHALES:** Several species of whales may be removed from the Interior Department's list of endangered species because a few companies which process whale oil want to continue trade with foreign exporters of whale products. The Endangered Species Act bans the importation of species or their products on the list beginning next year. According to an Interior Department official, the whale oil companies agree that the very scarcest whales (right, blue, humpback, and bowhead) ought to be kept on the list; but they

want to remove the smaller varieties, the sperm, finback, and sei whales, which have been harvested heavily by Russia and Japan since the larger species became rare during the last few decades. The whales could be removed from the list at any time.

● **VIRGIN ISLANDS TEKTITE PROGRAM:** The Virgin Islands Government is planning marine science programs for its Tektite facility, an underwater laboratory-living habitat, and invites scientists to submit research proposals for 1971 to: Ian Koblick, Special Assistant for Undersea Programs, P.O. Box 599, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands 00801.

● **EASTERN EUROPEAN EXCHANGES:** The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) is soliciting applications from American scientists who wish to visit the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, or Yugoslavia during the 1971-72 academic year. Applications and information about length of visits, payment of expenses, and qualifications may be obtained from the NAS, Office of the Foreign Secretary, Washington, D.C.

● **MSG:** A report, prepared by a committee of the NAS-NRC, on the food additive monosodium glutamate (MSG) indicates that no evidence was found "of hazard from the reasonable use of MSG in foods for older children and adults except for those who are individually sensitive to the substance." The report, released by the Food and Drug Administration, also indicated that since MSG was not found to benefit infants it should not be added to baby foods.

● **FUEL ADDITIVES:** The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) has announced regulations pertaining to the registration of fuel additives. The first fuel designated under the regulations is motor gasoline; manufacturers have 90 days following the effective date of the regulations to notify HEW of fuel additives, purpose of the additives, and characteristics and effects of each additive. The National Air Pollution Control Administration may request further information about the concentrations of the additives, their compositions, and their toxicity.

find it difficult to return because of changes in the technology. One organization, the National Committee for Careers in Medical Technology, has started a program of refresher training to help solve this problem.

In addition to low salaries, allied health fields are unattractive because of poor occupational mobility, both vertically and horizontally. "In far too many instances, a closed door in a health job has meant a permanent loss to the health manpower pool," wrote J. Warren Perry, dean of the School of Health Related Professions, State University of New York at Buffalo, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* last October. Rigid educational requirements, set down by the ever-increasing number of professional organizations, are largely to blame. There is almost no proficiency or equivalency testing to permit the granting of academic credit for knowledge or experience obtained in related health fields. For example, a woman with 5 years experience as a laboratory assistant who wishes to become a medical technologist must start at the beginning to meet the requirements of 3 years of liberal arts college followed by a year in an approved clinical program—following the same program as students who have had no health experience at all. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that professional organizations, which jointly with the AMA set recommended standards for certification, are often quite jealous of their jurisdictions, insofar as they can perceive them in a group of fields where occupations overlap each other. One group of medical technologists, for example, has long been feuding with the American Society of Clinical Pathologists about whether the clinical pathologists' organization, which originally developed the medical technology occupation, should continue to exercise control over the now well-established profession. This dispute, the most serious but not the only one, may have to be resolved in court.

Despite these obstacles, there is now a sprinkling of action aimed at improving career mobility in the allied health field—and the federal government is interested in helping out.

The National Committee for Careers in Medical Technology has received a federal grant to study and make recommendations in the area of equivalency and proficiency testing. And the ASAHP is currently negotiating with a government agency about a grant to