

nals, the price of the photocopied version is lower than that of the original subscription. No explanation of pricing seems to be available from the Soviets except that they price the photocopied versions to recover costs. *Science* and some other journals with political or social science content that Soviet officials may regard as controversial are censored and, in some cases, page makeup is altered. The price of the Soviet edition of *Science* may, therefore, reflect the added editorial and production costs.

The agreement with the Soviets on *Science* concluded in December 1973 provided for a 10 percent royalty in exchange for reproduction rights. Last month AAAS received a check for \$3829.79, which amounted to most of the anticipated royalty payment for 1 year for 485 copies to be distributed in the U.S.S.R.

At the time of Soviet accession to UCC, some observers argued that a strong Soviet motivation was to block publication in the West of the work of Soviet dissident writers. It was suggested that if Western publishers ignored the control of the Soviet copyright agency over all Soviet works published abroad, the Soviets would repudiate the UCC. Some Western publishers went on record that they would publish dissident manuscripts, international copyright laws notwithstanding, and would expect to win any legal action which ensued. In the past year there has been no major test precipitated by a controversial work. But a number of Westerners have been told by Soviet contacts that, in effect, their government does not need the copyright law to stifle the dissidents.

Last month at the Frankfurt Book Fair, a major annual outing for the international book trade, a senior official of VAAP was both accessible and much sought after. Neither he nor the Soviet officials seem to stress that joining the international copyright community is a dividend of detente. But, he said that a major purpose of his agency was to promote international cultural and scientific exchange and spoke optimistically of major new initiatives with U.S. commercial publishers.

From the American side, some publishers have approached Soviet scientists to explore possibilities of their signing up as authors of books to be published here. This kind of free enterprise is fine with the Soviets so long as VAAP is on hand when a contract is written.—JOHN WALSH

Briefing

Interior Seeks to Open Naval Oil Reserves

Interior Secretary and energy superchief Rogers C. B. Morton has asked Congress for the authority to open up Naval petroleum reserves, which are now intended for development for national defense purposes only, to private exploration and development.

In a letter dated 18 October to the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, Morton suggested an amendment to a pending public land management act (HR 16800) that would enable the Secretary of the Interior to establish national petroleum reserves "on any reserved or unreserved public or acquired lands of the United States (except lands in the National Park System and, after December 31, 1983, the National Wilderness Preservation System)."

The amendment would appear to give Interior a free hand in selling oil leases anywhere except in national parks; but a spokesman says the intent of the wording is only to get around a recent court decision that forbids resource exploitation in any of the 15 million acres now under consideration for inclusion in the wilderness system.

The main purpose of the amendment, though, is to permit Interior to get at two Naval petroleum reserves: Pet I, in Elk Hills in California, and Pet IV, in Alaska. Elk Hills, wrote Morton, "constitutes the only immediately available source for increasing our domestic supplies of petroleum." Within 2 years, he said the reserve could be producing 270,000 barrels of oil a day. Pet IV, which is largely unexplored but which, according to some estimates, could contain as much oil and gas as Prudhoe Bay, would take a lot more time and money to develop, and Morton believes that the sooner private enterprise is unleashed in the area, the better.

Under existing law, the President and the Secretary of the Navy must agree that oil production in these areas is "required for the national defense," and Congress must concur. Morton wants the law changed so that Interior can make a unilateral decision (in consultation with, but not necessarily with the concurrence of, the Department of Defense) to turn parts of

Naval reserves into national reserves and open them up for private exploration and development. Congress would be given 60 days to veto the decision. A decision to develop these areas now, wrote Morton, is necessary because even an accelerated program of drilling on the outer continental shelf (*Science*, 15 November) will not suffice to decrease dependence on foreign oil.

Environmentalists regard Morton's proposal as just another piece in the rapidly accumulating pile of evidence that the Ford Administration lacks any serious commitment to conservation of national energy resources. Joe Browder of the Environmental Policy Center says the concept of opening up the Navy's reserves is not necessarily bad but, within the context of the "let's develop everything now" mentality of the Administration, the proposal is "not rational."—C.H.

Edelin Case Will Go to Trial

The case of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. Kenneth Edelin, the Boston City Hospital physician who has been indicted for manslaughter in the death of a fetus, is going to be heard in open court. Edelin was indicted by a Boston grand jury last April for allegedly killing a "baby boy" during the course of a legal abortion. The case raises a number of complex issues, among them the time when a fetus becomes a "legal person" and the point at which it becomes viable (*Science*, 25 October).

Those questions were the basis for motions to dismiss the case that Edelin's attorney, William P. Homans, filed with the court. He argued that a fetus is not a legal person, protected by the Constitution, and he argued that the particular fetus in this case had not reached the point of viability. Therefore, he maintained, his client could not have committed any crime against it.

Superior Court Judge James P. McGuire apparently was not sufficiently persuaded to throw the case out. After contemplating the matter for a couple of weeks, he denied the motions to dismiss, without comment. Edelin will stand trial after the first of the year.

—B.J.C.