

cess works; it is legitimate, in fact, it is even less irrational than some of the policy processes I've seen in medical schools."

The observations the fellows have made about Washington are hardly unique but they are arrived at with the enthusiasm and

\*Glaser, who wished to pursue his interests in problems of alcohol and drug abuse, worked only in the Senate because there is no subcommittee in the House with primary responsibility for initiating action in this area.

openness of someone making a new discovery, and one can only judge it worthwhile that academic scientists gain as many insights into Congress and the Executive as they can. Banta, like all of his colleagues save one\*, worked in both the House and Senate, gaining some appreciation of how the two bodies differ. On the House side, he worked for the health subcommittee

chaired by Representative Paul G. Rogers (D-Fla.) and came away impressed by the depth of information about health issues that Rogers himself has at his command.

Rogers asked Banta to make a study of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in preparation for hearings planned for this fall. Banta recalls meeting with Rogers to discuss the proposed study. "I expected

## Briefing

### Psychologists Sit Still for Jensen

For anyone who thinks times haven't changed on the politico-academic front, ample evidence to the contrary was offered at this month's meeting of the American Psychological Association in Chicago. There, speaking in a packed ballroom, Berkeley psychologist Arthur Jensen, whose investigations of the heritability of intelligence have made him intensely controversial, was allowed, relatively unmolested, to give a talk elaborating on why whites do better on IQ tests than blacks.

Jensen, who shared the podium with Belvin Williams, a black psychologist with the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey, told the audience that his studies of the IQ scores of black and white California school-children show that IQ tests are not "culture-biased," as many claim. "Culture-loaded," yes—as is any test that uses a particular language or shows pictures of such items as airplanes. But not culture-biased, says Jensen, who adduces as evidence the fact that both groups experienced the same "item difficulty." That is to say, both groups found the same questions difficult, and questions ranked the same in degrees of difficulty for both. The difference was that more blacks got more items wrong than did whites, even between groups of comparable socioeconomic status.

The other mainstay of Jensen's assertion that tests are not culture-biased is the fact that the average difference in scores between the two groups (one standard deviation, or 15 IQ points) is the same as the average difference between children of the same family. So, he attributes the difference to unequal racial distribution of what has been called the G factor (G standing for general), which he describes as the ability

to perform mental manipulations and transformation of ideas. The harder the questions, the more "G-loaded" they are.

In past years, mature professionals have been roused to anarchic uproars by milder fare than that. This year the only disruption was from a band of five placard-carriers whose loud attempts to take over the microphone were shouted down by the otherwise calm audience (they were allowed to speak after the presentations)—and the presence of plainclothes members of the Chicago police force appeared to be an unnecessary precaution.

And what did Williams have to say? His speech, "Not by tests alone," dealt with the general difficulties of achieving test fairness, which in testing circles means the ability of a test to accurately predict performance in a given area.

When it came to refuting each other, there was no hand-to-hand combat. The closest Williams came was to observe that trying to identify innate group differences was "putting the cart before the horse. You can't get a clear reading . . . [until] you can say the difference is not a function of deprivation," and the only way to prove that is first to eliminate or compensate for the deprivation, said Williams.

Some APA officials were uncomfortable about having Jensen on the program at all, and were irritated that Jensen, in a press release, appeared to represent himself as having been invited by the leadership of APA when he was in fact invited by the division of educational psychology.

The willingness of psychologists to hear Jensen out is certainly an indication of the measure of civility and political apathy that has settled back upon academe. It may also be a sign that the race-IQ issue has retreated from its brief fling on center stage. Many psychologists either flatly reject or feel repelled by Jensen's theories,

and most seem to feel that his findings, in any case, have little relevance when much remains to be done in correcting deficits that are clearly nongenetic.

—C.H.

### Kissinger Promises Third World Technological Help

The Secretary of State's speech to the United Nations this month was remarkable for the profusion of technological promises held out to the Third World. Kissinger proposed the establishment of no less than four technically oriented institutes:

- An International Energy Institute to help devise conventional and alternative energy sources suited to the conditions of developing countries.

- An International Industrialization Institute to conduct research on industrial technology of relevance to developing countries.

- An International Center for the Exchange of Technological Information to act as a clearing house for "ongoing research and new findings relevant to development."

- An International Fund for Agricultural Development.

The most clearly thought out of these proposals is the International Industrialization Institute, which was suggested in 1973 by a panel of the National Academy of Sciences. The nearest to fruition is the International Fund for Agricultural Development, an idea mooted by the OPEC nations at the world food conference in Rome. The Administration has a request for \$200 million before Congress, expenditure of which is conditional on the oil producers and other countries putting up some \$1 billion. As at present envisaged, the fund will be an independent agency, which raises questions of how it will coordinate with the expanding agricultural

him to talk for about 5 minutes, making a few generalizations about NIH, and then turn to me to say, 'And now, how do you think this should be done?' Instead, Rogers spoke for about an hour about the issues he thought important at NIH, and it was clear he did not have to rely on his staff to do his thinking for him"—which is not to say that Rogers does not depend heavily

on his staff which is generally regarded as first rate.

Banta was, no doubt, particularly struck by the knowledge of health issues some House members have because he came to the House after a stint in the Senate where, he observed, subcommittee staff people play an extremely critical role, sometimes to the point of conceiving and drafting leg-

islation which is then handed over full-blown to the senators. Banta worked especially closely with Jay Cutler, chief minority staffer for the Senate health subcommittee chaired by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.); in this capacity, Cutler is responsible to Senator Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.), who is the ranking Republican on the subcommittee and who has shown a

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development program of the World Bank.

Kissinger's speech, read in his absence by United Nations delegate Daniel P. Moynihan, also announced that the United States would increase its bilateral support of agricultural production to \$582 million this year. This makes good the promise held out in Kissinger's speech to the United Nations last year, that such support would be nearly doubled.

Another undertaking made in Kissinger's 1974 speech was to establish an International Fertilizer Institute. The institute is now operating at Mussel Shoals, Alabama.—N.W.

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### Scientists Say Astrology Is Not True

If any believer in astrology is likely to have his mind changed by the weight of scientific authority, he will surely be crushed by the manifesto published in the current issue of *The Humanist*. There he is informed by 186 scientists, including 18 Nobelists, that astrology has no scientific basis.

"We are especially disturbed," say the manifesto's luminous signatories, "by the continued uncritical dissemination of astrological charts, forecasts, and horoscopes by the media and by otherwise reputable newspapers, magazines, and book publishers. This can only contribute to the growth of irrationalism and obscurantism. We believe the time has come to challenge, directly and forcefully, the pretentious claims of astrological charlatans."

Why should an eminent group of academics think it worth their time to take out after astrology? Why not tarot cards too? Or scapulimancy? Or other nonempirical, nonrational systems of thought such as religions? Signatory Harvey Brooks, professor of technol-

ogy and public policy at Harvard, sees the manifesto as a sort of consumer advocacy on the part of scientists—"People are being bilked by astrology," he says. The manifesto's originator is Bart J. Bok, emeritus professor of astronomy at the University of Arizona. Bok considers astrology to be of particular concern to scientists because its practitioners, by using computers and proper astronomical data, have spread the view that their activity has a scientific rationale. "Astrologers claim they have 20 million believers. It becomes necessary for scientists to speak out," states Bok.

The American Astronomical Society declined to denounce astrology, saying it was beneath their dignity, so Bok circularized some 225 scientists drawn from the society's membership and that of the National Academy of Sciences. No less than 186 proved willing to zap the zodiac. Signatories include NAS president Philip Handler, a Leo, economists Wassily Leontiev (also Leo) and Paul Samuelson (Pisces), the Librarian Sir Francis Crick, and Piscean Linus C. Pauling.—N.W.

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### ERDA R & D Plan Aired

Hearings on the Energy Research and Development Administration's (ERDA) national energy plan were being held this month in three cities by the three members of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

Judging from the first 2 days' testimony, in Washington, D.C., the most noteworthy deficiency of the plan is its failure to promote, and evaluate the effects of, a systematic program of energy conservation. A number of witnesses from public interest and environmental groups noted that the plan puts its main conservation emphasis on efficiency of energy use and does not

question the need of Americans to continue their energy-profligate life-style.

The plan (its full name is "A national plan and program for energy research, development and demonstration: creating energy choices for the future") emphasizes the need to shift reliance away from natural gas and oil to coal and nuclear power for the rest of the century. All the environmentalist critics complained that not enough attention is being paid to solar and geothermal power, and noted that other government reports predicted that solar and geothermal sources would contribute a substantially larger proportion of the national energy supply by 2000 than is estimated in the ERDA report. The Environmental Policy Institute joined others in decrying the government's fixation on "energy independence" and the report's use of oil import levels as the "sole criterion" for evaluating its various scenarios. (Everyone does scenarios these days; this report has six, the last of which—full steam ahead on all technologies—was adjudged the only way to avoid unacceptable reliance on oil imports.)

Industry representatives were, expectably, happier with the plan, and most suggested limited alterations—that is, the Atomic Industrial Forum wants more emphasis on the breeder reactor, the American Gas Association says gas can have a bigger role in America's future than the plan envisages, and so forth.

The tireless trio from CEQ, which seems to have a remarkable ability to sit through hours of listening to many witnesses say the same things, has moved on to hearings in Los Angeles and Detroit.

The council will then submit a report to Congress and the President, as required by law, that will serve as an aid to ERDA budget deliberations and a guide to next year's updating of the plan.—C.H.