

as other reasons, that Kelley decided in 1976 that the only practical alternative to terminating CCH would be to decentralize it.

Identification and FINDER

Another problem is the fact that the computer does not always correctly identify people, especially people who have

common names. For instance, according to newspaper reports, William A. Smith, a 25-year-old Concord, New Hampshire, man, was roused from his bed by police at four in the morning, taken to the station, and grilled for 4 hours. What had happened was that, after letting Smith go on a minor traffic violation earlier in the evening, the police had been informed by

NCIC that the same Smith was a criminal who used the name "Barnes" and was wanted in New York.

It took William Smith several hours and a telephone call to a friend who was a policeman in neighboring Durham, to convince the authorities that he was neither "Barnes" nor wanted in New York. Smith has since filed suit for \$100,000

Panel Calls for Global Food and Nutrition Research Drive

A combination of intensified agricultural research and "political will" could result in elimination of the worst aspects of the world food problem by the end of this century, according to a report released on 23 June by the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences.

The report—"World food and nutrition study: the potential contributions of research"—was ordered by President Ford after the 1974 World Food Conference. But its recommendations, particularly those which would put the Department of Agriculture (USDA) in a pivotal international role vis-à-vis world agriculture and nutrition, are receiving high level attention from this Administration, and are clearly more consonant with the initiatives taking shape under President Carter than with the policies of his predecessors.

The report is definitely a creature of the 1970's. It pulls away from the moonshot mentality embedded in the Green Revolution, recognizing instead that obstacles raised by politics, population, and poverty have to be overcome if increased production is to make a dent on the food problem. It puts heavy emphasis on the need for nutrition research and points out that affluent countries have their own brand of malnutrition. It calls for developing lines of research—such as nitrogen fixation, genetic manipulation, and efficiency of photosynthesis—that will make minimum energy demands. The report also reinforces the new dogma of the '70's that research will have to be designed to be appropriate to local needs, and calls for more social science and behavioral research as part of the overall program.

The panel, headed by Harrison Brown of the California Institute of Technology, states that food production in developing countries will have to be doubled by the end of the century. Very little of this increase will come from putting new land under cultivation, said Brown at a press conference announcing the report; rather, it will come from increased yields and better food preservation.

The panel made it clear that the United States has to take the leadership in broadening and speeding up international food and nutrition research. First priority, therefore, is improvement in U.S. agricultural research, a pan-governmental effort involving in particular the Agency for International Development, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health, as well as USDA.

The report says AID money to developing countries for research should be tripled from the current level of \$30 million per year. It wants NIH to reorient its nutrition research toward problems of more relevance to developing

countries, and suggests a heavier commitment by NSF to nutrition and related social and behavioral research.

As for USDA, the report echoes recommendations that have frequently been made in the past, to wit: the department needs an undersecretary devoted solely to research; more basic research is needed; a new competitive grants program on food and nutrition research is needed; and more research money should be made available to universities and private research institutions outside the land-grant system. An immediate increase of \$120 million a year for research is called for.

The recommended shifts in priorities are all in line with the report's contention: "In our view, the Secretary of Agriculture speaks not just for the interest of American food producers but also for the broader interests of all American citizens in a world moving to alleviate hunger and malnutrition."

The USDA, under the leadership of Secretary Robert Bergland, is clearly more amenable to these changes than it was in the Earl Butz days. "We largely concur with what is in this report," says James Nielson, the new deputy assistant secretary for conservation, research, and education. In fact, the report as a whole feeds right into current Administration thinking on what to do about world food. It contains a "very good set of recommendations," according to Gilbert Omenn of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and is "getting the highest possible level of review" in the Executive Office of the President. Omenn observes that the Administration has already made some moves along the lines proposed in the report—it has, for example, asked Congress to appropriate \$27.6 million for a competitive grants program in USDA that would focus on research on nitrogen fixation, photosynthesis, and genetic manipulation.

The report lists 22 areas of high-priority research, putting special emphasis on investigations likely to produce workable results in the near future. Included are such categories as management of tropical soils (where annual production might be raised up to 200 percent); beefing up aquatic food sources (with more efficient processing, fish protein available for human consumption could be doubled without increasing the present world catch); and research on the implications for nutrition of general government policies.

Says the report: "If there is the political will in this country and abroad . . . it should be possible to overcome the worst aspects of widespread hunger and malnutrition in one generation." That is a big "if." The members of the panel can at least find some justification for their optimism in the fact their report is being read.—C.H.