

the regular budgets of the agencies. The agencies usually manage to eke out funds for administrative costs and travel expenses, but the U.S. share of joint research must be funded in the free-for-all competition for federal research funds.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has therefore played a special role in science bilaterals. NSF's annual spending on international science cooperative activities has been running at about \$10 million, of which \$1.5 million—the largest dollar share for any single country—currently goes to China.

While Sino-American cooperation is booming, the relationship is not without difficulties. There are U.S. qualms that the Chinese government underfunds its exchange students, for example, but most of the frictions seem to arise in other areas. Reciprocity has been an issue, for example, in negotiations over an agreement on the exchange of technical information. The U.S. agency involved is the National Technical Information Service (NTIS), which disseminates technical reports on research funded by the federal government. The Chinese have taken full advantage of access to NTIS services, becoming the second biggest user nation after Canada with a standing order for two microfiche copies of virtually everything NTIS publishes.

When the agreement came up for renewal, U.S. officials complained that the United States did not have access to comparable Chinese material, but, in effect, was simply permitted to subscribe to Chinese journals and similar publications. The discussion is still in progress.

Similar complaints have been raised by other U.S. agencies about the inability or unwillingness of the Chinese to provide access to particular people or information. Some Americans think that the Chinese persist in equating requests for information with spying.

There have, however, been improvements in Chinese flexibility in dealing with U.S. requests, particularly since the Chinese government decentralized authority to make arrangements under the protocols. American observers also say that the Chinese have been most free-wheeling in seeking cooperation with U.S. professional organizations, industry groups, and individual companies.

At this point, at least, there is agreement on both sides that the relationship is thriving. As a U.S. industry observer put it, borrowing one of those lyrical Chinese nature similes that Americans seem to find irresistible, cooperation is growing "like bamboo shoots after the spring rain."—**JOHN WALSH**

Mistrial Is Declared in Mechanization Case

A legal challenge to farm mechanization research at the University of California has ended in a mistrial because the presiding judge became seriously ill. A new judge was assigned to the case on 16 May and trial proceedings at Alameda Superior Court in Oakland, California, are expected to start all over again in the fall.

The court ruling was a major setback for the group that filed suit against the university in 1979. After 5 years of legal skirmishing with the university, California Rural Legal Assistance, an advocacy group representing the California Agrarian Project, finally got its day in court this spring. The lawsuit charges that the university improperly spent public funds for mechanization research that allegedly benefit only agribusiness and violated federal land-grant acts as well. The implications of the case, however, are broader, raising questions about the social costs of innovation (*Science*, 30 March, p. 1368).

The trial, which began on 12 March, was suspended in mid-April when Judge Spurgeon Avakian was stricken with a respiratory ailment. At that point, the advocacy group had presented nearly half its case and laid out its legal strategy in the non jury trial. William Hoerger, an attorney for the legal group, expressed disappointment with the decision, saying that he had been pleased with the progress of the trial. Although university lawyers now have the advantage of knowing the group's approach to the case, Hoerger said, "I can't see changing our strategy."

Gary Morrison, lead attorney for the university, said that he hopes to persuade the new judge, Raymond Marsh, to throw out the case entirely, but added that the chances of success were slim. Morrison said the university, at the very least, will ask Marsh to narrow the scope of the lawsuit before the trial begins. The university filed similar motions under Avakian but was largely unsuccessful. Marsh is expected to meet with the two parties within the next few weeks.

Shortly before the trial was suspended, the university revealed a list of 16 expert witnesses who were to

testify on its behalf. Assuming that the case goes to trial, the advocacy group will be taking their depositions during the summer.—**MARJORIE SUN**

Formaldehyde Issue: Back to Square One

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced last week that it will consider whether formaldehyde should be further regulated and classified its review of the chemical as a top priority. The decision represents a reversal of a 1982 ruling by EPA under Anne Burford.

The formaldehyde issue has run full circle under the Reagan Administration. Just before Burford took office, agency officials recommended that formaldehyde—a ubiquitous chemical found in products such as particle board, plywood, and permanent press clothing—should be designated a priority for regulatory review. Animal studies had shown that the chemical causes cancer at relatively low doses. But former head of EPA's toxic substances office John Todhunter ruled in 1982 that formaldehyde did not merit this classification. Critics of his decision charged that Todhunter had been unduly influenced by industry and last year, the Natural Resources Defense Council challenged Todhunter's decision in a lawsuit against the agency.

EPA's new decision brings the agency back to the same point in the regulatory process as when the Reagan Administration took office. The agency said it is giving priority to formaldehyde since a large number of people are exposed to the chemical, particularly workers who handle formaldehyde-treated fabric and people who live in homes constructed largely from plywood and particle board—such as mobile homes.

The agency must now decide whether formaldehyde poses to humans a significant risk of cancer, gene mutations, or birth defects. At the same time, the agency has announced that it will consider ways to regulate the chemical. None of these actions, however, guarantees that the agency will actually follow through with regulations, but the priority designation sets in motion the review process.

EPA's actions represent a victory for the Natural Resources Defense Council. Jacqueline Warren, the lead attorney on the case for the council, said she was pleased with the decision but added that "we're now back to square one."—**MARJORIE SUN**

Suits Over Genetically Impure Mice Settled

Two closely related lawsuits, one brought by University of Wisconsin cancer researcher Brenda C. Kahan and the other by the university against Charles River Breeding Laboratories, have been settled. Both suits alleged that the company supplied Kahan and her colleagues with genetically contaminated mice and failed to notify them properly of the problem, causing losses in research effort and money (*Science*, 12 August 1983, p. 625). Kahan's action also alleged that her career was set back because of the mishap.

The settlement between the university and the company establishes a \$40,000 research fund, two-thirds of which is to support Kahan's research and the remainder to support zoological research at the university. Terms of the agreement between Kahan and the company have not been disclosed.—**JEFFREY L. FOX**

France Turns to Banks for Research Funding

Paris. In a move designed to soften the impact of recent cuts in public spending on scientific research, the French government announced last week that two major agencies—the Atomic Energy Commission and the National Center for Space Studies—will be allowed to borrow \$30 million from the country's nationalized banks, and redistribute about 80 percent of it to other government research agencies.

The government's decision follows sharp criticism from within the scientific community of an announcement at the end of March that the research budget will be reduced by over \$200 million as part of a broader package of

spending cuts designed to help reduce France's growing budget deficit. Such a move would have virtually eliminated the 8 percent real increase in the civilian research budget which the government had previously announced for the current year.

The major beneficiary will be the National Center for Scientific Research, the main source of funds for basic research in France, which had previously faced a cut of \$25 million in its budget and the prospect of having to reduce the running costs of some of its programs by 25 percent. It will now get back almost half this figure through the loan scheme.

The National Institute for Health and Medical Research will similarly benefit from \$3 million from the loan, and a slightly higher figure will go to the National Center for Oceanic Research. The Atomic Energy Commission will be permitted to keep almost \$4 million for its own research programs, and the space agency, the lead agency in France's ambitious plans for developing a new generation of Ariane launchers, will keep \$2.4 million.—**DAVID DICKSON**

Mary Lasker Enshrined Eponymously at NIH

With impressive dispatch, Congress has passed legislation to honor Mary Woodard Lasker—a philanthropist whose name has become synonymous with biomedical health and education concerns—by naming a center for her at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland. The bill passed both houses so rapidly that several members of Congress were said to be chagrined at missing an opportunity to voice their praise for Lasker. President Reagan is expected to approve the measure soon.

The center will be situated on land virtually surrounded by the NIH campus that had belonged to the Catholic Order of the Visitation, which was represented by a dwindling group of nuns who occupied a convent on the grounds. A sale of the land was proposed and, with a special legislative appropriation, a deal consummated with NIH in November 1983.

Plans for the center are still indefi-

nite. However, negotiations are under way with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute over the possibility of converting the convent building and establishing a center to train medical students interested in spending a year in research at NIH.—**JEFFREY L. FOX**

Comings and Goings

An Administration champion of deregulation, **Christopher C. DeMuth**, has announced plans to resign from the Office of Management and Budget. DeMuth, who has been administrator for information and regulatory affairs, took a strong interest in the affairs of the Environmental Protection Agency and more recently caused a stir when he advised a cabinet council to examine the federal government's role in regulating biotechnology products. According to an agency press release, DeMuth intends to "enter private business" and also finish writing a book on government regulation. DeMuth said in a prepared statement that he is resigning to work for President Reagan's reelection. He is expected to step down in July and will be replaced by **Douglas H. Ginsburg**, who has a similar academic background. Both men were classmates at the University of Chicago Law School and have been members of the Harvard faculty. Ginsburg is currently deputy assistant attorney general of the Justice Department's antitrust division.

The National Institutes of Health will be losing two directors, but gaining one this summer. In July, **Richard M. Krause**, head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases for 7 years, will become dean of Emory University's medical school and **Lester B. Salans**, head of the National Institute of Arthritis, Diabetes, and Digestive and Kidney Diseases for 2 years, will become dean of Mt. Sinai School of Medicine and senior vice president of the medical center. A University of Missouri professor, **Donald Lindberg**, has been selected to be director of the National Library of Medicine, a post that has been vacant since September. Lindberg, whose nomination must still clear White House channels, is a physician and a specialist in computer applications for information services.—**MARJORIE SUN**