

theories for this thing." But no one can find anything obviously wrong with the experiment.

It is easy to replicate, so independent data should be in hand soon. But a priority fight is already shaping up. "I've gotten about 20 phone calls from non-scientists who claim they thought of it first," says University of Maryland physicist Robert Park, head of the American Physical Society's public affairs office. "They even had patents. One said he did his research with a frisbee."

Bridging the Student-Work Gap

College-bound high school students are showered with tests and guidance to help them plan their futures. But those headed for the world of work are often left to fend for themselves.

To remedy the information gap between employers and future workers, business groups are working on a scheme whose centerpiece will be a comprehensive new information and assessment system now under development at the Educational Testing Service (ETS).

The system, called "Worklink," would contain all manner of information on a job applicant's school record, interests, activities, special abilities, and work experience. Participation would be voluntary and individuals would have control over their own files. According to George Elford of ETS, "nobody looks behind the diploma," so employers rarely get much objective information on job applicants. Worklink would provide a broad, verifiable, and continuously updatable source of information to businesses that subscribe.

The National Alliance of Business and the American Business Conference (ABC) are currently mustering support for the idea among business and education groups. They are also discussing some pilot projects in California with the state's education superintendent Wil-

Brain Decade. *If you don't recognize that structure inside the head pictured here, you should by the end of the century, because Congress has designated the 1990s as the Decade of the Brain. The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy will coordinate federal activities during the decade, which was proposed by Representative Silvio O. Conte (D-MA) to capitalize on the explosive growth of knowledge in the brain sciences. A new budget for expanded brain activities is yet to appear, however. The advisory council of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke thinks that NINDS, which figures prominently in the plans along with the National Institute of Mental Health, needs \$703 million for the first year of the decade. But it actually got only a small increase, to \$472 million.*



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ABC president Barry Rogstad emphasizes that the businessmen's initiative also envisages more direct contact between students and potential employers, that it will help students and businesses better understand each others' needs, and will motivate kids to work harder in school.

That could be the most im-

portant part. An ABC survey of its 100 members reported that more than 50% labeled their concerns about education as "very serious."

Asians Up, Africans Down

Asians continue to dominate the foreign student population

in the United States, according to a report from the Institute of International Education (IIE). Asians made up 52% of last year's total of 366,354, with the largest number—29,000—from the People's Republic. "The effects of recent political upheaval in China on student flows are not yet perceptible," says the IIE. It adds that the continued surge in Asian students "is especially remarkable as Australia and Japan emerge as alternative destinations."

The bad news is that Africa accounted for only 7% of foreign students in the United States—even fewer than the previous year. Said IIE president Richard Krasno, "given the magnitude of the problems facing sub-Saharan Africa . . . the continuing decline in access of Africans to overseas education and training is alarming."

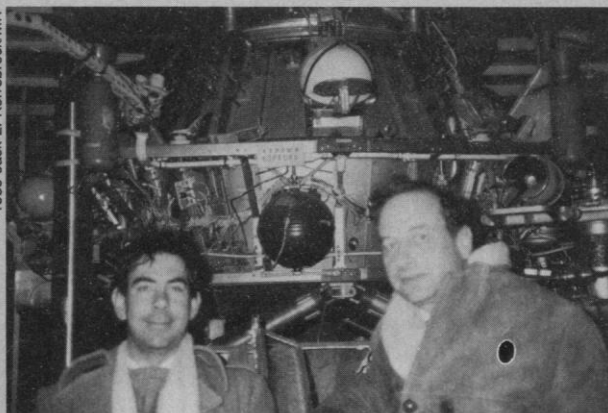
While there has been a decline in foreigners seeking undergraduate degrees, climbing enrollments in graduate schools boosted the total foreign student population by 3% last year. Engineering continues to be the dominant field, but it is fast being overtaken by business.

Russian Moon Non-Landing

The Soviets have casually disclosed a long-held secret to five visiting professors from Massachusetts Institute of Technology: yes, they were racing the United States to the moon in the late 1960s. But bad luck with a rocket booster forced them to abandon plans for a manned landing.

Professors from the MIT department of aeronautics and astronautics were at the Moscow Aviation Institute on 27 November when their host, Oleg Alifanov, told the group they were viewing the lunar landing equipment. "It was one of the most dramatic moments that I can ever remember," is how Laurence R. Young, one of the group, reacted. Edward F. Crawley called it "perhaps the most conclusive evidence to date that there was, in fact, a race to the moon." The mission was put on hold in 1972 and scrubbed in 1974 because of repeated booster problems.

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Lunar lander. Professors Crawley (left) and Young (right) in front of the lower portion of the lunar landing craft.

The professors reported that the main difference from the U.S. approach was that Russians had planned to launch the landing craft and spacecraft separately and have them rendezvous in orbit. Also, there were to be only two cosmonauts, with the lunar lander carrying one.

The hardware is now on display for teaching purposes.