

Gerald L. Wilson has also resigned effective 1 September. Appointment of their successors has been delayed until the new president takes office.

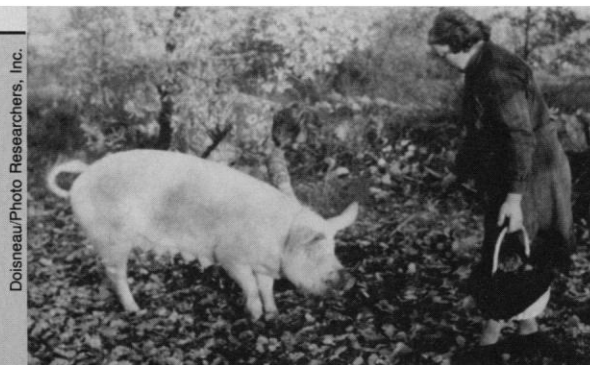
Census Adjustment Constitutional

Demographers who would use statistical methods to remedy the defects of the 1990 census have gotten a hand from the courts. U.S. District Judge Joseph M. McLaughlin ruled on 7 June that there's nothing unconstitutional about adjusting enumerated figures to account for the millions of Americans—primarily ethnic minorities and the poor—the census is expected to miss this year.

In considering whether to strike down a Commerce Department guideline that casts the constitutionality of adjustment into doubt, McLaughlin wrote: "The concept of statistical adjustment is wholly valid, and may well be long overdue." But McLaughlin let the guideline stand, reasoning that "it does not follow that any and all forms of statistical adjustments will be sanctioned."

Cold Fusion Claims a Victim

Cold fusion continues to sink in the laboratory (see *Science*, 15 June, p. 1299), but in academic politics it is becoming a force to be reckoned with. University of Utah president Chase N. Peterson, an ardent supporter of the disputed phenomenon, last week announced that he would retire at the end of the 1990–1991 academic year. Peterson has been in hot water with the faculty's academic senate ever since that body learned a purportedly anonymous \$500,000 grant to the university-affiliated National Cold Fusion Institute was actually a Peterson-approved transfer from the school's own research fund. On 1 June he admitted that hiding the source of the money had been a mistake, but was



Redundant? French sow searching for truffles.

Le Nez Knows

Pigs of Perigord, look to your laurels. An artificial nose threatens to make you redundant. The nose can detect the scent of that rarest of delicacies—the truffle—as accurately as a trained pig, but, unlike the porker, it never eats the overpriced fungus before the handler can get to it. And unlike the dogs also used to hunt truffles, it is tireless and undistracted by more interesting smells.

Krishna Persaud, a biochemist at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, has spent the past 6 years developing artificial noses and tongues to replace human detectors in such industries as food and brewing.

The truffle hunter was made to order for a team at the University of Toulouse in southwestern France, which is anxious to help farmers find the 50% of the truffles that pigs and dogs miss. It consists of 20 tiny sensors based on organic semiconductors, whose characteristics change when a particular gas is adsorbed onto the sensor's surface. A microprocessor reads the sensors and decides whether they smell truffle.

A couple of months ago, the Toulouse researchers staged a field test in which the bionic sniffer was pitted against a truffle hound in locating six truffles that had been buried about 20 centimeters deep. "I found them very easily," says Persaud, but after the first four he began to get false readings. "The earth had been turned over and smelled of truffles. Also, the machine sometimes reacts to humus in the soil." The dog eventually found a fifth truffle.

Back in the lab, the team is tinkering with the nose to help it discriminate more accurately. When the next season starts in November, an improved version will be working alongside the dogs and pigs. Persaud is convinced his device will beat them and find a ready market among French farmers.

unable to preempt a senate resolution questioning his fitness to lead the university.

Peterson, who was unavailable for comment, denied in a statement that he was resigning under pressure. He stated only that "the period of time I can effectively provide leadership is nearing an end."

Peterson's retirement casts a shadow over the future of the Cold Fusion Institute. "There is no question that Dr. Peterson was and is a very strong supporter of cold fusion at the university," said institute director Fritz G. Will. "His leaving cannot help the institute." Will blamed the faculty for "forcing" Peterson's resignation and suggested that its action was a manifestation of hostility to cold fusion research in general.

One of Peterson's most effective acts was his successful solicitation last fall of a \$5-million state grant for establishing the institute. Only \$1.6 million of that grant remains, however. A state oversight panel has ordered a scientific review and a

financial audit to determine how the money was spent.

Animal Activists Repudiate the Center

With an attendance estimated by U.S. Park Police at 24,000, the 10 June March for Animals didn't set any Washington records. But it was large enough to challenge the image of animal rights activists as "cranks, extremists . . . a part of the lunatic fringe," Peter Linck, director of the National Alliance for Animal Legislation, told the *Washington Post*.

If crafting a new, moderate face for the movement was the aim, however, nobody informed the assembled demonstrators. When actor Christopher Reeve told the crowd he supported the properly regulated use of animals in medical studies such as AIDS research, he was met with a chorus of boos. Reeve added: "If you want to get things done, the worst thing that can happen to



Bloody labs. An activist protests animal research.

you is to be identified as the fringe." He was booed again, and he left the podium.

Donald Barnes, Washington director of the National Anti-Vivisection Society, explained that Reeve chose an unfortunate time to extemporize. "I guess we're all appalled that we didn't realize his lack of commitment to our ideals."