that Congress is disposed to give its library a divorce.

Despite implications for national security and economic progress, Congress has not really thought much about LC as the keystone of a national information system. And the job of convincing Congress may not be made much easier by the report, which offers no mechanization millennium for information but, rather, comes through with an honest two cheers for automation.

—JOHN WALSH

Cooperative Research: Biologists Plan International Study Program

Plans for American participation in a projected international program of cooperative research in basic biology are currently under study by a special committee appointed by the National Academy of Sciences.

The proposal for an International Biological Programme (IBP) was developed by the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and its affiliated unions in the life sciences, particularly the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS). The proposal grows out of a feeling among biologists that certain significant biological problems might best be explored on an international basis.

While discussions on how to organize a coordinated program preceded the International Geophysical Year, the success of IGY provided added impetus and the belief that "it could be done." What is planned now is not, like the IGY, an intense effort compressed into a brief time but a program of cooperative research, at preselected sites over a period of perhaps 5 years.

Early international consultation in ICSU and IUBS produced agreement that the major biological problem facing the world's population is the world's population. In trying to define a unique contribution that biologists could make in this field, it was agreed that to concentrate on the negative side—population control—would restrict participation to specialists in reproductive physiology and perhaps in sociology. Instead, it was decided to develop a positive study and to focus attention on the natural resources on which human life depends.

In November 1963, after several transmutations in international committees, a plan for an International Biological Programme to be entitled "The Biological Basis of Productivity and Human Welfare" was approved by the executive committee of IUBS and the General Assembly of ICSU. It is this plan that is now being examined by individual nations.

The objectives of the plan are, "ensuring worldwide study of (1) organic production on the land, in fresh waters, and in the seas, so that adequate estimates may be made of the potential yield of new as well as existing natural resources, and (2) human adaptability to the changing conditions." To promote these ends, the proposal outlines five main areas of research: (i) productivity of terrestrial communities (with major subdivisions in ecology, physiology, and conservation); (ii) productivity of fresh-water communities; (iii) productivity of marine communities; (iv) human adaptability; and (v) use and management of biological resources. Special attention is also to be given to problems of public relations and training.

Underlying the research outlines are certain common principles, also approved by IUBS and ICSU: a sense of urgency, both "because of the steadily growing pressures of human population on renewable resources [and] because many of the situations, both biological and human, are changing fast . . . ," and a sense of modesty and limitation. "The proposed program," the report states, "is based largely on existing research . . . so that the functions of the organizers will be to coordinate rather than to direct." The hope is, however, that the program would have a catalytic effect on research in these fields by, among other things, providing at least some training grants to research workers—300 to 500 is the number aimed for at present. Beyond that, the goal of the program is simply to obtain "internationally comparable observations of the basic biological quantities," and international coordination of research methods as well as projects.

Whether the plan will be put into action in the form described depends a good deal on the decisions of the ad hoc committee recently appointed by the National Academy to consider U.S. participation. The charge to the committee is "to review and evaluate the proposed program in relation to the interests of U.S. scientists, and to make recommendations as to its modification, to identify individuals and groups that might wish to be involved, and to arrive at conclusions as to the nature and probable extent of U.S. participation and to formulate recommendations as to the organizational structure necessary to ensure effective coordination of project activities." All this is supposed to be done by the end of 1964, and if no serious problems emerge, the program might get under way not too long after its original target date of 1965. The members of the U.S. committee are Stanley A. Cain (chairman), W. Frank Blair, John E. Cantlon, George K. Davis, Kingsley Davis, Bostwick H. Ketchum, Paul J. Kramer, William S. Laughlin, Thomas Park, and Sid Robinson. Inquiries should be addressed to the Ad Hoc Committee on IBP, Division of Biology and Agriculture, National Academy of Sciences–National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington 25, D.C.—ELINOR LANGER

Hornig Assumes White House Duties

The Senate last Monday confirmed Donald F. Hornig to succeed Jerome B. Wiesner as director of the Office of Science and Technology. The confirmation was made without a committee hearing, which is often the case with posts below the topmost governmental echelon. Hornig, who is on leave from Princeton, where he headed the chemistry department, will also succeed Wiesner as presidential science adviser; chairman of the 18-member President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC); and chairman of the Federal Council on Science and Technology, a sub-Cabinet group of government research executives. Wiesner, who has been appointed dean of science at MIT, will continue as a member of PSAC.

Announcements

Princeton University recently combined its departments of aeronautical and mechanical engineering, to form a department of **aerospace and mechanical sciences**. The merger is a move to expand the university's opportunities for training in the newer, interdisciplinary areas of the applied sciences. The department will include undergraduate and graduate programs. Courtland D. Perkins, professor of aeronautical engineering, has been appointed chairman.