that two serial publications of the National Science Foundation are a useful starting point. The first, *Scientific Information Activities of Federal Agencies* (10 cents), features a different agency in each issue and covers the agency's organization and mission, subjects in which it generates information, where its publications are announced, and ways for individuals to get information on current projects. Each issue has instructions for obtaining the featured agency's documents or services and tells the locations, functions, and policies of the agency's data centers, libraries, and field offices. Copies of most back issues are still available. The second of the serial publications, *Scientific Information Notes* (25 cents single copies, or $1.25 a year in the United States, $1.75 abroad), discusses national and international developments in scientific and technical information dissemination. The journal is mainly for information specialists, but it also reports on new services for the general scientific community. Copies of the 1965 and 1966 back issues are available. (Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402)

The major contribution of the National Library of Medicine is the Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System (MEDLARS), which offers three services. (i) It compiles several specialized bibliographies in both basic and clinical research fields. Best known of these is the multidisciplinary *Index Medicus*, a subject-author index of articles that have been published in over 2400 U.S. and foreign journals on topics ranging from air pollution to zoology. Copies of *Index Medicus* are available in medical libraries; they also are sold by the Government Printing Office for $3.75 each or $40 a year; GPO sells an annual list of the journals indexed for 75 cents. (ii) MEDLARS compiles lists of citations on specialized topics; these "demand bibliographies" are available free of charge to any researcher. (iii) It offers, also at no charge, a limited number of "recurring bibliographies," compiled at specified intervals for small groups of researchers; some, of broader interest, are also available to the scientific community for a small fee. Applications for these services should be sent to the Chief of the Bibliographic Services Division, National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, Maryland 20014.

A new information resource at the National Bureau of Standards is the

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **FERMI AWARD:** For the first time since its establishment in 1954 the Atomic Energy Commission's Enrico Fermi Award for 1966 will be shared by three foreign nuclear scientists: Otto Hahn, Lise Meitner, and Fritz Strassmann. The three scientists were selected to receive the award (a citation, a gold medal, and a one-third share of the $50,000) because of their combined and individual efforts in discovering nuclear fission and for experimental studies which led to the discovery. Meitner, 87, is the first woman to receive the award. She was born in Vienna, worked for many years in Germany, and now lives in England. Hahn, 87, who now lives in Goettinger, West Germany, and Strassmann, 64, director of the Institute of Inorganic and Nuclear Chemistry, Mainz University at Mainz, West Germany, published on 6 January 1939 the results of experiments revealing that the nucleus of a uranium atom can be split into two parts. About the same time Meitner had also come to the conclusion that atom splitting was possible and had already referred to it as a "fission process." When news of the German research reached this country it sparked the development of the atomic bomb. The award is named in honor of the late Enrico Fermi, leader of the group of scientists who achieved the first self-sustained, controlled nuclear chain reaction on 2 December 1942. The award is made on the recommendation of AEC's General Advisory Committee and is approved by the President.

● **PLANT SCIENCES REPORT:** A 10-year research program in the plant sciences has been outlined by a panel of the National Academy of Sciences in a recently released report, *The Plant Sciences, Now and in the Coming Decade.* (Available from the Printing and Publishing Office, NAS-NRC, 2101 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20418, $5.) Federal expenditures totaling approximately $1.5 billion—over and above that spent for work done in government laboratories—would go into studies of plant sciences over the decade as a way to prevent food shortages in the future. (The panel compares the proposed figure with approximately $33.4 million per year that the government now spends in support of plant sciences.) Noting that each year the nation loses about a million acres to housing, airports, and shopping centers (much of it first-class farmland) while gaining two to three million consumers of agricultural products, the report states that our present surpluses are based on research developments of 25 to 40 years ago. "How long the nation will have a food reserve," it says, "will probably depend on how many similar discoveries are made by basic research in plant science during the ensuing 40 years." The report, the fifth in a series of studies on the long-range Federal support of science, was issued by the Academy's Committee on Science and Public Policy and was prepared by a panel of scientists under the leadership of Kenneth V. Thimann, formerly of Harvard, now at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

● **BIRTH CONTROL AID:** The Swedish International Development Authority has announced a grant of $300,000 to the International Planned Parenthood Federation in support of IPPF's 1966 budget. SIDA is also making available $86,000 for information, training, and specific projects to be agreed upon by the two groups. Sweden has been a great supporter in the family planning field for several years and currently has basic agreements with the governments of Ceylon, Pakistan, and Tunisia for cooperation in population programs. Half of Sweden's $65-million foreign aid programs this year is administered through multilateral assistance programs of the UN. This represents five to six times more than 5 years ago.

● **WEST COAST HEADQUARTERS:** The Geological Survey is establishing West Coast headquarters for its marine geology and hydrology program at the Survey's Research Center at Menlo Park, California. The office, headed by Parke D. Snavely Jr., will serve as headquarters of geological and geophysical investigations of the continental shelves and slopes—work which has been under way in the Survey for several years. The Interior Department announcement also said that research activities will be conducted at La Jolla in collaboration with the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries and the Scripps Institute of Oceanography.