

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS:** A bit less than the amount that was sought, but a bit more than was appropriated last year—that's the pattern of House action in the appropriations bill covering the Department of Interior and several other agencies. The bill, which was passed last week, provides a total of \$1.3 billion, which is \$32 million above last year's appropriation, but \$78 million below the President's request. Among the research-related agencies in the bill is the Geological Survey. Last year it received \$80 million; this year it sought \$88 million, and the House voted \$85.5 million. The Bureau of Mines' appropriation for research and resource development came to \$34.7 million last year. This year it sought \$39.9 million; the House verdict came to \$38.1 million. The National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities last year received \$9 million. This year it sought \$16.3 million; the House voted to appropriate \$11.7 million. The Smithsonian Institution received a small lecture in addition to the standard budgetary treatment. Last year it received \$22.5 million. This year, it sought \$25.1 million. The vote was for \$23.7 million. The report of the appropriations subcommittee stated that "The Committee continues to view with some concern the energetic efforts to expand the scope of activity by the Smithsonian Institution." Having said this, the Committee stated that it "reiterates its desire and intent that the Smithsonian shall take a very active part in the celebration of the bicentennial of the American Revolution."

● **BIOLOGY HISTORY JOURNAL:** Plans for a *Journal of the History of Biology*, to be published by Harvard University Press, have been announced by Everett I. Mendelsohn, Harvard associate professor of history of science, who will serve as editor. The biannual journal will be about 160 pages in length with the first issue scheduled for October. It will contain articles in all fields related to biology, except medicine, and include background on recent discoveries as well as long-established theories. An international advisory board has been formed to promote contributions from other countries. Members of the editorial board are Ernst Mayr, Harvard; H. Bentley Glass,

State University of New York, Stony Brook; Jane Oppenheimer, Bryn Mawr; and Hebbel E. Hoff, Baylor.

● **RADIO ASTRONOMY:** Sir Bernard Lovell, director of the University of Manchester's radio observatory at Jodrell Bank, England, has announced that his radio astronomy group is designing a 400-foot dish steerable radio telescope. The 250 foot dish antenna at Jodrell Bank is currently the world's largest steerable radio telescope. Lovell estimated that the new antenna will cost about \$12 million. The British scientist announced the plans at a Space Science and Astrophysics Seminar recently at Stanford University.

● **PHYSICS FOR POETS:** Morris Shamos, chairman of the department of physics, New York University, has announced a new course in physics for nonscience majors, titled *Physics for Poets*. It will deal with the impact of physics on social, philosophical, and aesthetic movements from ancient Greece to the present. Through the course, Shamos said, he hopes to "open the eyes of arts students to the freedom and creativity in scientific thought as an intellectual activity."

● **LAWRENCE AWARD WINNERS:** The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) last week presented its 1967 Ernest O. Lawrence Awards, consisting of a \$5000 stipend and a gold medal, to the following: Murray Gell-Mann, California Institute of Technology; Mortimer M. Elkind, National Cancer Institute; John M. Googin, AEC's Oak Ridge, Tenn., facility; Allan F. Henry, Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory, Pittsburgh; John O. Rasmussen, Lawrence Radiation Laboratory, Berkeley, Calif.; and Robert N. Thorn, AEC's Los Alamos, N.M., Scientific Laboratories.

● **PHS RESEARCH GRANTS FOR 1966:** The Public Health Service has published the 1966 edition of *Research Grants Index*, containing scientific subject-matter summaries of research projects in the biomedical and health-related fields supported by PHS grants during fiscal 1966. The two-volume index is available from the Superintendent of Documents, GPO, Washington, D.C. 20402, for \$12.75.

local comparisons, and it will have national overtones in the dispensing of federal aid."

"No board of education or school staff in an area with an inferior school image would be able to withstand the heat which would be put on by power structures, legislatures, and parents," the committee added. "The pressures on teachers and school systems to teach for the national assessment tests would be too strong to resist. Thus the tests would become coercive, and control of the public school curriculum would be in the hands of a private group [the assessment, Tyler has said, is expected to be run by a commission of respected citizens] with no legal responsibility to the U.S. Office of Education, to any state, or to the electorate." Although the fear expressed here was that a private group would dominate curriculum planning, some AASA leaders say their principal concern is that the assessment program will inevitably come to be administered by the Office of Education.

The association, at its February meeting, did not adopt the executive committee's tough policy of noncooperation, though it did speak out against any uniformly applied national assessment involving regional comparisons. The committee's position had been condemned in hundreds of newspaper editorials. "The interpretation, almost without exception, was that AASA was against the examination of school performance by an outside agency acting on behalf of the American public," an AASA official says. Comment from within AASA reportedly ran 15-to-1 in favor of the committee position, but among the dissenters were a number of prominent AASA members, such as Theodore Sizer, dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Education, and James E. Allen, Jr., New York's commissioner of education.

Although it is not yet clear that AASA and the Tyler committee will find a *modus vivendi*, they have agreed to form a joint committee for discussion of the NAEP tests and procedures and the purposes to which they will be put. The committee will hold its first meeting on 3 June, and at that time several representatives of other professional groups and of the general public may be invited to join in the discussions. Tyler believes that AASA's opposition to NAEP is based on a misunderstanding of the program—a misunderstanding which he hopes the joint discussions will clear up. The AASA lead-