

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **ITALY JOINS 300-GEV:** The Italian government has announced its willingness to participate in the construction of the 300-Gev accelerator proposed by the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN). Italy, which contributes 11.4 percent of the CERN regular budget, is the fourth among CERN's nine member states to declare officially its willingness to participate in the 300-Gev project. The others are Austria, Belgium, and France. Earlier this year Great Britain stepped out of the project for financial reasons (see *Science*, 28 June). The German government, potentially the largest financial contributor, still is uncommitted.

● **TRANS-ACTION TRANSITION:** The 5-year-old social science journal *Trans-Action*, published by Washington University in St. Louis, has been purchased for \$50,000 by a group comprised largely of professors in the social sciences. They include David Riesman of Harvard, Oscar Lewis of the University of Illinois, Howard Becker of Northwestern, Herbert Blumer and Nelson Polsby of the University of California, Jerome H. Skolnick of the University of Chicago, and Erving Goffman of the University of Pennsylvania. The publication is edited by Washington University sociology professor Louis Horowitz. The move by the consortium of professors prevented its sale to commercial publishers.

● **TOP FIVE:** The five universities drawing the most new Woodrow Wilson fellows this year are: University of California, Berkeley, 9; Columbia University, 9; Harvard University, 8; University of Michigan, 8; and University of Chicago, 6. Effective this fall, the number of full first-year graduate Woodrow Wilson fellowships has been reduced from 1000 to 100 following a decision by the Ford Foundation to cut back substantially its support of Wilson 1-year graduate fellowships.

● **NEW PUBLICATIONS:** *Report of the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries for the Calendar Year 1966*, a report on federal government fish and wildlife programs and research during 1966, may be obtained at no cost from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

having been selected as one of the first 50 centers of excellence to be developed by the Defense Department's Project Themis.

Some scientists grumble that the institute's personnel roster has grown more rapidly than its equipment, with the result that scientists must occasionally do without gear they regard as necessary or desirable. Nevertheless, the institute seems to have done remarkably well in acquiring worldly goods during its brief existence. Mordy reports DRI has acquired assets worth roughly \$10 million including two abandoned Air Force buildings (one contains 120,000 square feet), a new water resources building, an atmospherium-planetarium, four big radars, three computers, two planes, mobile laboratories, and a lot of lesser equipment.

In an effort to gain public support for the institute in an environment he regarded as indifferent or hostile to research, Mordy has made himself and the DRI a highly visible part of the Nevada scene. He writes a weekly column for seven Nevada newspapers in which he intersperses explanations of basic science ("Lightning Takes Many Forms") with plugs for the DRI ("Dr. Went's 'Blue Haze' Theory Reflects Credit to University").

Ample Press Coverage

Mordy and the DRI have received heavy coverage in the local press, and Mordy is not averse to planting an occasional news item with friendly reporters. When *Science* asked a Nevada supreme court justice what he thought of DRI, the first word he came up with was "controversial." Consider these headlines from Nevada newspapers over the past 18 months: "DRI Seeks More Control—Own Trustees Wanted"; "Desert Research Chief Protests Hamstring—Resignation Threatened by Mordy"; "Mordy Charged with Neglecting Finances"; Mordy Urges Regents: 'Fight for Research Funds.'

Another means of gaining visibility—and some badly needed equipment—was an industrial research contract with a Nevada-based company. DRI developed a number of new products for the company, including quick tanning aids and a lip protector, before the project was terminated last year when a major national pharmaceutical company bought out the Nevada firm. Most of the publications resulting from the original contract were confidential reports to the company. Why did the young institute devote itself to developing better tan-

ning aids for commercial use? Because, says Mordy, the assistance given local industry "cut a lot of ice with the state," the contract supported a man who had no other grants, it enabled the institute to acquire equipment worth about \$70,000, and it gained the institute publicity in national ads. "We could make life in a test tube in this state and nobody would notice," says Mordy, "but if we make suntan lotion and our name gets mentioned in an advertisement in *Life*, that's something entirely different."

The institute has recently gained an enhanced status within Nevada's university system. Originally, it was subordinate to the University of Nevada, which had a main campus in Reno and a branch campus in Las Vegas. But in 1967 the fast-growing Las Vegas campus (known as Nevada Southern University) gained autonomy, and on 12 July, after some tense political infighting, the DRI managed to become a separate division of the state university system, independent of both campuses. The value of DRI to the universities can be seen in the fact that it became a sought-after prize in the political struggle, with Reno seeking to retain control and Las Vegas seeking to ensure "equal access" for itself.

N. Edd Miller, president of the Reno campus, told *Science* DRI has had "an enormous impact" on his university. He said DRI had stimulated all research activities on the campus by creating an atmosphere of respect for research and, more specifically, by using its overhead funds to provide seed grants for research by non-DRI faculty members (even in such areas as art and music). Miller said DRI's presence had stimulated the growth of graduate programs in hydrology and physics, had spurred serious consideration about the possibility of establishing a medical school, had made faculty recruiting easier, and had contributed to graduate and undergraduate teaching programs. DRI does not conduct a teaching program itself, but DRI scientists participate actively in the university-administered teaching program.

The DRI has clearly had a remarkable growth, but some observers believe it has now reached an important crossroads. The institute has developed several first-rate laboratories. The question now is whether it can keep up its momentum and become outstanding as a whole. Those who have watched the DRI's progress over the past 8 years are not about to bet against it.

—PHILIP M. BOFFEY