

delay the tests. Senator Gravel is reluctant to challenge the AEC's plans and has not asked for a postponement of Milrow.

The President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC) panel on safety aspects of the test program delivered its report late last fall to Donald Hornig, President Johnson's Science Adviser. The report never has been made public, though the chairman of the panel, Kenneth S. Pitzer, president of Stanford and member of PSAC until this past January, says that to edit it and remove classified information would not have been difficult.

While the report did not declare that the Amchitka tests would involve unacceptable risks, the panel members appear to have looked at this test series dubiously. It had no mandate to consider alternative sites for the tests, but some of its members have told *Science* that the consensus within the group was that the north slope of Alaska's Brooks Range would be a safer place than Amchitka for high-yield tests. This area is not earthquake-prone and is mostly uninhabited. Further, the oil industry is currently demonstrating that large-scale drilling projects are feasible in this arctic region, despite its deep permafrost and harsh climate.

The AEC has felt that the north slope is acceptable only as an "insurance" site in case Amchitka cannot be used. It decided against the slope chiefly on the grounds that the costs there would be extremely high and the logistical problems very difficult. Had the agency decided otherwise, it would now probably be fending off criticism from conservationists fearful of the impact that the test program would have on the fragile tundra ecology. Conservation groups also are concerned, however, about the ecological impact of the test program on Amchitka. The island is part of the Aleutian Islands National Wildlife Refuge and is a stronghold of the sea otter, a species once near extinction.

Gordon J. F. MacDonald of the University of California at Santa Barbara, a geophysicist who served on PSAC and the Pitzer committee, says that, if nuclear tests must be conducted on Amchitka for compelling reasons of national security, the precautions observed should include (i) increasing the shot yields gradually and (ii) closely monitoring the shots for seismic effects. Again, the consensus within the committee was that

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **FLORISSANT FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT:** Congress has acted to preserve 6000 acres of the endangered Florissant fossil beds near Pikes Peak, Colorado, by making the site a national monument. The fossil beds, which scientists claim are "rich" in leaf and insect fossil species, were threatened by a real estate company that planned to bulldoze the site for a housing development (see *Science*, 6 June 1969). While Congress deliberated a bill to establish the monument, a citizen's group sought and obtained a temporary restraining order from a federal Court of Appeals to keep the real estate company from beginning excavation. By 9 August both Houses completed action on the bill to establish the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, which was sponsored by Representative Frank Evans (D-Colo.). The measure authorizes \$3,727,000 for the Secretary of the Interior to purchase the fossil beds site. The bill still must be signed by President Nixon. Although the fossil beds have been designated as a national monument, the site will not be totally safe from destruction until funds are actually appropriated and the purchase of the land has been assured.

● **BIOCHEMISTRY CONFERENCE MOVED:** The 8th International Congress of Biochemistry, scheduled to be held in September 1970 in Rome, has been transferred to Switzerland. The Italian committee preparing the Rome conference said that student political pressure and a major academic reform bill in Parliament prevented it from devoting sufficient time to organizing the Congress in Italy. Student leaders, complaining of university overcrowding and a rigid faculty hierarchy, had threatened to demonstrate at the conference if it were held in Rome. The Congress is expected to be held from 3 to 9 September 1970 in Lucerne, Interlaken, and Montreux.

● **NEW WOODS HOLE DIRECTOR:** James D. Ebert has been named director of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Ebert succeeds H. Burr Steinbach who is retiring from that position in August 1970, but will still remain as dean of the Graduate School of the Woods

Hole Oceanographic Institute. Ebert, who is director of the department of embryology of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, will wear two hats. He will continue in his present position with the Carnegie Institution, while assuming new duties at Woods Hole. Ebert, who is a past president of the American Institute of Biological Sciences and a National Academy of Science member, has served as a trustee of the Woods Hole Laboratory since 1964.

● **SULLIVAN NAMED TO PUBLISHERS COUNCIL:** Richard H. Sullivan, president of the Association of American Colleges and a member of the National Science Board, has recently been named managing director of the American Book Publishers Council, a trade association of book publishers. Sullivan, a former president of Reed College in Oregon, was chosen after the industry decided a leading figure from the academic community was needed to promote more interest in books.

● **UNIVERSITY DONATIONS INCREASE:** Despite campus disturbances last year private gift support for higher education has increased substantially. A survey of the Council for Financial Aid to Education shows that gifts to colleges and universities rose in fiscal 1968 to an all-time high—\$1.57 billion, an increase of more than 8 percent from the previous year. Gifts for the fiscal year 1967 showed only a 3.3 percent increase over fiscal 1966, which, in turn, showed a decline of 1.2 percent from the previous year.

● **MARINE RESEARCH:** The first comprehensive catalog of U.S. marine research activities has been released by Edward Wenk, Jr., National Council of Marine Resources and Engineering Development executive secretary. *Marine Research—Fiscal Year 1968* contains descriptive summaries of more than 2500 unclassified marine research projects supported last year by federal and nonfederal organizations. The catalog on marine research, which is document number 1969-350-238, may be obtained for \$5.50 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.