

68,000 dollars to support conferences, study groups, training, and assistance to member states—a slightly larger figure.

National Academy versus Fat

THE United States National Academy of Sciences has now published a further edition of the report of the Committee on Fats of the Food and Nutrition Board, and has in the process moved a tiny step closer to a declaration against fatty acids and phospholipids as components of human diet. Without saying in as many words that dietary fat disposes a person to atherosclerosis, the report wags a finger at diets containing excessive fat—a category which can be counted as including the American diet, with 40 per cent of its calories derived from fat. Though it lends some support to the view that there is a link between the concentration of cholesterol in the blood and the likelihood of contracting atherosclerosis, this evidence is described as “considerable but not conclusive”.

On the issue of whether poly-unsaturated fats are the best fats to eat, the report comes down, without much emphasis, on the side of those who hold that margarine is better than butter. First, it acknowledges the validity of the dietary experiments which show that the substitution of “unsaturated vegetable oils for animal fats” leads to a reduction in the concentrations of cholesterol in the circulating plasma. The report goes on to argue, however, that there is no evidence to show whether some unsaturated acids are more effective than others in bringing about a reduction of plasma cholesterol, and no evidence to show which natural animal fats are most productive of high concentrations of cholesterol. There is also continuing uncertainty about the extent to which the concentration of cholesterol, as distinct from the concentration of triglycerides in plasma, or some combination of them both, may be relevant to the causation of atherosclerosis. The evidence of epidemiological studies is, at the same time, inconclusive; in some parts of the world where all the fats in diet are animal fats, the amounts of cholesterol in the blood are low. In the circumstances it is no wonder that the report comes out most strongly against over-eating as such.

Material for Materials Science

Two new journals have stepped in to fill what they feel is a gap in the literature. The *Journal of Materials Science* and *Materials Science and Engineering* have appeared within five months of each other; the *Journal*, first published in February, states that its purpose “is to promote an inter-disciplinary approach to the study of the relationships between the structure, properties and uses of materials”. The editorial staff is based in England with Prof. R. W. Cahn, professor of materials science at the University of Sussex, as chairman. The first issue of *Materials Science and Engineering* came out this May; its sub-title is “An International Journal” and its associate editors and advisory board represent the United States, Britain, The Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy, the Soviet Union, Japan, Australia, Canada, Sweden, and Argentina. Prof. Robert Madden, director of the School of Metallurgical Engineering of the University of Pennsylvania, is editor-in-chief; Dr. A. H. Cottrell is a member of the Advisory Board. Like the *Journal*, *Materials*

Science “has been founded in the belief that much depends on a deeper understanding of the structure and synthesis of materials, and of their engineering application. . . . It is their [the editors and publishers] hope that *Materials Science and Engineering* will become the chosen publication medium for significant and forward-looking work in this broad field.”

If these two journals are to become complementary and not merely competitive, the operative word in the above statement must be ‘broad’. And from the introductory issues there is some hope that this will be the case; *Journal of Materials Science* seems to be concentrating more on the chemical properties while *Materials Science and Engineering* is placing more emphasis on physical and engineering aspects of the science.

Parliament in Britain

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on June 26 to a request for a list of advanced technical and scientific projects which Great Britain is undertaking in collaboration with European nations, Mr. G. Thomson, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, listed twenty-five projects. Three of those are under the European Nuclear Energy Agency, four under the European Space Research Organization, in addition to the Sounding Rocket Programme 1964–67, four aviation projects in collaboration with France, and two natural gas projects. The list also includes the *Vulcain* project, the European Launcher Development Organization, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, the Channel Tunnel, an Anglo-Dutch project, *Sea Dart*, an Anglo-French-German project for a lightweight jet lift engine, an Anglo-German-Canadian project for a reconnaissance drone system, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, and the Cross-Channel Current Link. There are also close relations between many British and European bodies in the field of advanced science and technology.

IN reply to questions in the House of Commons on June 28, the Prime Minister, Mr. H. Wilson, said that it was the duty of the Committees on Manpower Reserves for Science and Technology to look at the whole field, including manpower employed in defence. Although much work was due on this subject in relation to the National Plan, there was no special entry or section dealing with it. Sir Solly Zuckerman was now looking intensively at all questions arising out of the co-ordination of scientific and technological matters, and manpower was one of them. It was the Government's policy to transfer far more scientific reserves to civil purposes from defence, and the transfer of much of the Ministry of Aviation to the Ministry of Technology would further this process. Expenditure on civil research and development had increased in 2 years from £194 million to £289 million on the Civil Votes.

IN replying in an adjournment debate on water supplies for Manchester in the House of Commons on June 27, the Minister of Housing and Local Government, Mr. R. Crossman, stated that after the new Water Order at present with the printers, there would be no further abstraction from Ullswater in the Lake District, and no more artificial resources such as was