

Division of Fisheries and Oceanography, C.S.I.R.O.,
Australia : Dr. G. F. Humphrey

DR. G. F. HUMPHREY has been appointed chief of Division of Fisheries and Oceanography of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia, in succession to Dr. H. Thompson, who retired last year because of ill-health. The headquarters of the Division are at Cronulla, New South Wales. Dr. Humphrey is senior lecturer in the Department of Biochemistry, University of Sydney, having been a member of the University staff since 1941, and the bulk of his published research papers are on marine biochemistry, a field in which he has collaborated with the Division of Fisheries. His studies outside Australia have included work at the Molteno Institute, University of Cambridge, at the Universities of Glasgow and London, and at the marine laboratories at Plymouth, England, and Roscoff, France. It is intended to give increasing attention to the physical examination of the ocean as contrasted with the studies in marine biology, which have been the major concern of the Division of Fisheries in the past; and to reflect this change in emphasis the Division has been renamed the Division of Fisheries and Oceanography. For the development of Australian fisheries more accurate and complete information is needed about the factors which lead to fluctuations in the abundance of fish in the surrounding seas; this will involve the Division in more comprehensive studies of ocean currents, temperature distribution, salinity of the sea and its content of phosphate, and the influence of these physical factors on the reproduction, growth and distribution of fish populations.

Uranium for Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy

REPLYING to questions in the House of Commons on February 28 regarding President Eisenhower's offer to supply uranium for developing the peaceful uses of atomic energy, the Prime Minister said that how this offer could best be utilized by the countries of the world, individually or in association, would need careful thought. A start had already been made in the Colombo Plan and in the Bagdad Pact as well as in bilateral arrangements between Great Britain and the United States and certain countries in Africa and Asia to help them in training in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and he thought that their first need would be to form a nucleus of trained technicians. British supplies of uranium, he added, are very limited, and he could not hold out hopes that we could follow the lead of the United States in that respect, although we have been working closely with the United States in such matters as technical help for countries which produce uranium. He agreed that it might be wise to consider channelling these supplies through the United Nations to all countries rather than through bilateral agreements.

Industrial Uses of Nuclear Energy in Britain

In replying to questions in the House of Commons on February 22 regarding the industrial uses of nuclear energy, the Lord Privy Seal, Mr. R. A. Butler, said that the Government intends to press ahead with this new source of power. For nuclear reactors which British firms might build in foreign and overseas territories, the Atomic Energy Authority is confident that natural uranium will be available as soon as it is required. Supplies of enriched uranium are limited and must be shared between defence and

civil needs, but some of the civil share will be reserved for export. The output of enriched uranium is limited by the capacity of the Authority's diffusion plant at Capenhurst, and this is being watched with a view of meeting the needs of the nation. Mr. Butler also said that the Atomic Energy Authority will supply the necessary nuclear fuel, on a rental basis, for the reactor which Associated Electrical Industries proposes to construct. The terms for this loan, which are being very carefully watched, will cover the cost of fabricating the fuel elements; a percentage of the total cost of the fuel, including an element for research and development; the cost of fuels spent during the running of the reactor; and the cost of reprocessing spent fuel elements. Associated Electrical Industries intends to make the reactor available for educational research work by a group of universities in south Britain; but while paying tribute to the public spirit of this firm, Mr. Butler asked for notice of the further question as to what the firm is paying for the information and techniques supplied by the Atomic Energy Authority. He promised to consult the Lord President of the Council as to the best means of making full information on all these arrangements available to the House of Commons.

Technical Education in Britain

THE promised White Paper on Technical Education (Cmd. 9703. H.M.S.O. 1s. 6d. net) includes a review of the position of technical education in England and Wales to-day against the background of the educational system as a whole, with a short account of the role of the universities, particularly in regard to technological education. The plan now announced proposes to raise the capacity of advanced courses at technical colleges as soon as possible from 9,500 to about 15,000, and to make increasing use of 'sandwich' courses for these advanced courses, backed by an adequate system of financial aid. Students proposing to attend courses leading to a technological award will be eligible for Technical State Scholarships, and the number will be raised as these courses develop, while the Government also proposes to allow ordinary State Scholarships awarded on the results of the General Certificate of Education examinations to be held not only for honours courses at universities but also for courses leading to a technological award. The Government also proposes to develop as many as possible of the twenty-four colleges at present receiving 75 per cent grant for some of their advanced work into colleges of advanced technology, with strong governing bodies and independence appropriate to the academic level of their work, and within the framework of a five-year programme of building development to cost £70 million, with a further £15 million for equipment over the period to 1960-61, inclusive, of which £39 million is to be started during the first three years. These colleges will be expected to develop their advanced work considerably and to divest themselves of work below the advanced level, as well as to undertake a substantial amount of research.

As regards technicians, five or six of whom may be required to every technologist, and craftsmen, while the Government is prepared to take its part in providing the additional facilities for technical education required to match any rise in numbers, industry must play the leading part in increasing the output of craftsmen. Besides adjustment of the terms of apprenticeship and education to suit changing needs, the Government looks to see the numbers of boys and