

are set out in its annual report (The Pasteur Institute of Southern India, Annual Report of the Director, 1960. Pp. i+122. Coonor: Pasteur Institute of Southern India, 1961).

National Research Development Corporation

THE National Research Development Corporation was set up under the Development of Inventions Act, 1948, to secure the development in the public interest of inventions resulting from public research which, in the Corporation's judgment, are not being sufficiently exploited, and to hold and dispose of rights in inventions arising from such research. Its aims and activities have only in recent years become known to many scientific and medical workers through publicity in connexion with some of the major projects with which the Corporation has been concerned, such as electronic computers, hovercraft, fuel cells, cephalosporin *C*, interferon, and the common cold vaccine. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of inventions notified to the Corporation in communications from universities, hospitals and other research institutions. The Corporation's policy, while not encouraging academic research to become primarily orientated towards the development of revenue-earning inventions, aims at encouraging the proper steps to be taken in securing patent protection where patentable inventions are a by-product of research and are of public interest and where they are in the interest of the inventors and their employers. The Corporation already maintains liaison with research workers in a great many of the faculties of universities and with teaching hospitals and other research institutions, but nowadays patentable inventions, particularly in the instrument field, are liable to originate unexpectedly in disciplines such as phonetics, orthopaedics, microbiology and psychiatry. In certain instances the Corporation finances development work on an invention which shows promise. The Corporation has made it known that it would be glad to hear of any device or process which could have a commercial application. It warns, however, that it is necessary to take patent action before the relevant work is published in a scientific journal. Further information can be obtained from the managing director, J. C. Duckworth, National Research Development Corporation, 1 Tilney Street, London, W.1.

Security Procedures in British Public Services

IN the House of Commons on April 5, the Prime Minister, Mr. H. Macmillan, announced that the Government accepted the recommendations of the Radcliffe Committee on Security Procedures in the Public Services, and was putting them into effect as rapidly as possible. The report disclosed no radical defect in existing security procedures, but contained valuable proposals for their improvement and intensification. The report was based on a comprehensive and searching scrutiny of British security procedures, but also demonstrated the unique difficulty of maintaining absolutely effective security in a free society. He had discussed the report with the Leader of the Opposition and some of his colleagues, who concurred in the Government's decision that the White Paper published that day contained as much of the report as could safely be published. The Government believed that publication would help to promote the wider public understanding of the importance and the difficulty of the problem of security. Mr. Mac-

millan gave a full assurance that the method of implementing the recommendations would be discussed with the staff side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council. A similar statement was made simultaneously in the House of Lords by the Lord President of the Council.

Underground Transmission of Electricity in Britain

IN reply to a question in the House of Lords on April 3, Lord Mills said that research into the underground transmission of electricity was the responsibility of the Electricity Council and the Boards, in consultation with the Minister of Power and the Secretary of State for Scotland. Some related research was carried out by the universities and by the Electrical Research Association. The Electricity Council and the Boards were seeking to reduce the cost of transmission underground by using alternative circulating materials and by investigating possible cheaper cables and methods of installation. However, while it was hoped to reduce the wide difference in cost, there was no real prospect that the use of underground cables would ever be as cheap as overhead lines, especially at high voltages. The question of research into this matter was periodically reported on by the Advisory Council on Research of the Minister of Power, and full account was taken of the progress of research in other countries. Even in regard to high-voltage cables, much research was already proceeding.

British Optical Astronomy

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on March 9, the Parliamentary Secretary for Science, Mr. D. Freeth, stated that in its report of 1959-60 the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy had pointed out that British optical astronomy required access to a large telescope of about 120-in. diameter in the southern hemisphere. Various schemes involving international co-operation had been studied, and there had been consultation with other countries, both within and without the Commonwealth, which might be interested in participating in a joint project. Examination of possible schemes was continuing but no decision had yet been reached.

Britain's First Training Reactor for Universities

THE Ministry of Works has let contracts for the construction of an experimental nuclear reactor at East Kilbride in Scotland for a consortium of universities (St. Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh, the Royal College of Science and Technology, Glasgow, and Queen's University, Belfast). The reactor will be made by Advanced Technology Laboratories of California, in association with G. and J. Weir, Ltd., of Glasgow. The laboratory building in which the reactor will be housed was designed by the Ministry of Works and will be erected by J. Crawford, Ltd., of Glasgow. The capital cost of the scheme will be paid for by a grant of £255,000 from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research to the consortium. The reactor, which will be next to the National Engineering Laboratory, is designed for a continuous power output of up to 100 kW., and will provide the universities with an extremely versatile aid for teaching and training engineers, physicists, chemists and biologists and for research in chemistry, metallurgy, biology, clinical science, etc. It will be the first university research reactor in Britain.