

These had established the fact that the feasibility of impounding fresh water in the way proposed required a further technical survey, and this very considerable undertaking would be considered in due course.

#### Poisonous Substances used in Agriculture

In reply to a question in the House of Lords on December 2, the Minister of State for Education and Science, Lord Bowden, said that the Government had accepted the recommendations of the Cook Committee on Poisonous Substances used in Agriculture and Food Storage. As assurances had been received of the co-operation of all interests concerned, it had been decided to give effect to the recommendations through the present voluntary scheme. The Cook Committee was now examining the present voluntary safety arrangements, and the need for legislation would be considered in the light of its advice. The Earl of Haddington, Lord Douglas of Barlock and Lord Saltoun all protested that voluntary action was unlikely to be effective and referred to the serious side effects on the breeding of birds, particularly birds of prey. However, Lord Bowden, in view of the agricultural value of these pesticides, merely emphasized that the Cook Committee and the manufacturers were anxious to produce insecticides which had the desired effects with as few side effects as possible. This was the subject of earnest discussion and research. In a written answer in the House of Commons on the same day, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Mr. F. Peart, stated that investigations by his Department supported the view of the Cook Committee in the review of the persistent organo-chlorine pesticides, published in March 1964, that the restrictions placed on the use of aldrin and dieldrin in cereal seed dressings were serving their purpose and had greatly reduced the number of deaths of seed-eating birds through these chemicals.

#### Long-term Role of Nuclear Energy in Western Europe

THE European Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development is to carry out a special study of the long-term role of nuclear energy in Western Europe. The study will include evaluations of reserves of uranium and thorium available to European member countries in various cost ranges, of long-term energy demands, and of the likely contribution from nuclear energy towards meeting these demands under the technical and economic conditions which may be expected to develop. The decision to make this study was taken by the Agency's Steering Committee at a recent meeting in Paris, under the chairmanship of Prof. Urs Hochstrasser, Swiss Federal Delegate for Atomic Energy Questions, and results from a preliminary proposal of Prof. Lew Kowarski, the Agency's scientific adviser, which was first discussed by the Steering Committee last July and has since been elaborated by a group of experts from Austria, France, the German Federal Republic, Sweden and the United Kingdom under the chairmanship of Prof. Kowarski. The study is expected to be completed by the summer of 1966.

#### Occupational Health Service in Dundee

Four years ago the Nuffield Foundation decided to spend a certain sum on experimental group occupational health services to well-established older industries spread over a city or town and mixed with residential and other property. The professor of public health and social medicine in St. Andrews University and the district factory inspector aroused interest and enthusiasm for a group service among prominent business men in the city of Dundee. Dundee's claim as a suitable area was put forward by them and was accepted by the Nuffield Foundation in 1962. This was the beginning of the Dundee and District Occupational Health Service, the progress of which is described by the nursing superinten-

dent, Miss Elizabeth J. Tyren, in *Occupational Health*, 16, July-August 1964.

There are several reasons why Dundee was considered a suitable area for this experiment. It is a medium-sized city of about 190,000 people, contained in an area about five miles by three miles, and is the third-largest city in Scotland. The city stands on the north shore of the Firth of Tay, linked with Fife to the south by a fine rail bridge and the new road bridge.

Dundee has variety in industry, although there are still many people employed in the jute trade. The other industries include linoleum manufacture, light engineering, carpet manufacture, confectionery, and flax spinning and weaving, and the city is a potentially prosperous one. These industries are scattered throughout the area among residential and other property, although an industrial estate is gradually taking shape to the north-west of the city. The member firms of Dundee and District Occupational Health Service are mostly of medium and small size and are, therefore, probably representative of the factories of Great Britain as a whole. The outlying parts of the city are gradually being filled with new houses as the centre of Dundee is replanned and rebuilt.

Another reason for the choice of Dundee was the fact that it is a university city containing the Queen's College of the University of St. Andrews. It was planned that, should the city be accepted for the group experiment, the student health service for Queen's College would become a member of the occupational health service, and this was an added attraction, as no other group health service has a university among its members.

The aims of the service were formulated early and are gradually being fulfilled in the various factories. They are: to promote and maintain the health and safety of people at work; to assist in the provision at work of immediate treatment for sick and injured people; to advise on the rehabilitation and placement in suitable work of those temporarily or permanently disabled by illness or injury; to advise on the provision of safe and healthy conditions by informed scientific assessment of the working environment; to educate all concerned in the attainment and preservation of good health; to carry out or promote research into the causes of occupational diseases and injury, and into the means of their prevention.

#### Publications of the Medical Research Council

UNDER the title *Current Medical Research*, the Medical Research Council, following its usual practice, has reprinted articles which appeared in the Report of the Council for the year 1962-63 (Pp. iii+51+3 plates. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1964. 4s. 6d. net). An important feature this year is the statement by the Council on the responsibility of investigators who conduct experiments on human subjects. The other articles deal with: the theoretical basis of organ transplantation; damage to human chromosomes due to ionizing radiations; clinical genetics; recent work on the control of ovarian function; the drug-resistances of micro-organisms; the chemotherapy of cancer; protein turnover in the central nervous system; and epidemiological research in psychiatry.

#### Housing Problems

*Public Health Papers*, published by the World Health Organization, provide a medium for the publication of reports usually prepared as contributions by the Organization to a particular health question, which have been considered to be of interest to a wider circle of readers than that for which the papers were originally written. *Public Health Paper No. 25* is entitled "Housing Programmes—the Role of Public Health Agencies" (By A. Andrzejewski and seven other authors. Pp. 197. Geneva: World Health Organization; London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1964. 8 Sw. francs; 13s. 4d.; 2.75 dollars). It discusses the responsibility of public health administrations in the field of housing; the basic principles of housing hygiene in