

Parliament in Britain

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on January 17 the Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Technology, Dr. J. Bray, said that the ministry was supporting the development of fluid logic devices for computer peripherals by two contracts under the Advanced Computer Techniques Project. One was with British Telecommunications Research, Ltd., and the other with International Computers and Tabulators, Ltd.; both were for 18 months and the ministry was paying half the total cost of each, £52,000 and £50,000, respectively. The aim of the contracts was the development of cheap individual fluid logic elements and of complex integrated arrays of fluid logic elements to perform particular logical functions.

IN a written answer in the House of Commons on January 19, the Secretary of State for Education and Science, Mr. A. Crosland, stated that Parliament would be asked to vote funds to meet the additional cost for all overseas students financed from British official sources (including the British Council), mostly from developing countries. A fund would also be provided to reimburse the additional £50 payable by students already embarked on courses and who were financed by the governments of developing countries. No part of the fees of overseas students was met directly by his Department, but even after the recently announced increase in fees, public funds would still be providing on average some two-thirds of the recurrent costs of overseas students at universities and colleges of further education.

REPLYING to a question in the House of Lords on January 19 regarding university fees of overseas students, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs, Lord Beswick, said that while the Government did not lay down fees to be charged by the universities, it had decided that the next quinquennial settlement of recurrent grant to universities should assume a free income of £250 a year from overseas students starting on courses in the next academic year. To avoid hardship, the increase in the fee assumed for those who had already started on courses extending into the next academic year would be limited to £50 a year for the remainder of their present course. The decision was taken in the light of the recommendations of the Robbins Committee and the Select Committee on Estimates that the general level of fees should be increased to meet at least 20 per cent of expenditure. For most United Kingdom students the general effect would be to transfer expenditure from central to local government. The existing fee structure resulted in a concealed subsidy to overseas students at United Kingdom universities which had grown from £3-4 million in 1955-56 to about £12 million in 1965-66. Even with the increased fee, this element of subsidy would be higher than it was 5 years ago. Some 30 per cent of overseas students came from countries such as the United States, Canada and the Scandinavian countries.

MR. GORONWY ROBERTS, replying to a question on January 19, said that during 1963-64 a total of 605 graduates of United Kingdom universities emigrated to the United States—298 had first degrees and 307 higher degrees.

University News: California Institute of Technology

THE California Institute of Technology has announced that the new Robert Andrews Millikan chair in physics will be held by Professor Murray Gell-Mann. Dr. Gell-Mann has been associated with the California Institute of Technology since 1955 and is distinguished for his contributions to the theory of fundamental particles and in particular for his introduction of the concepts of "strangeness" and the "eight-fold way", the second of which has provided a framework within which it may be possible to classify the particles. Dr. Gell-Mann also pointed to the value of "quarks" as a means of rationalizing relations between different particles.

London

DR. K. A. PORTER, reader in morbid anatomy at St. Mary's Hospital Medical School, has been appointed to the chair of pathology, tenable at that school.

Manchester

DR. T. S. L. BESWICK, at present reader in virology, has been appointed to the newly established chair of virology as from February 1. Dr. Beswick is known for his work on poliomyelitis vaccines and the experimental pathology of virus diseases.

University College of Swansea

DR. P. J. SYRETT, reader in botany in University College, London, has been appointed professor of botany in succession to Professor H. E. Street.

Appointments

DR. R. H. SIMPSON, associate director of the United States Weather Bureau, has been appointed director of the National Hurricane Centre in Miami, in succession to Dr. G. E. Dunn. Dr. Simpson will be succeeded by K. R. Johannessen, at present director of ESSA-Weather Bureau's Eastern Region.

Announcements

SIR ROBERT WYNNE-EDWARDS has retired as chairman of the Council of Engineering Institutions, a post which he has held since the council was established. A graduate of Christ Church, Oxford, he spent many years in Canada before returning to Britain in the 1930's, and during the Second World War he worked in the Ministry of Works. After the War he returned to private industry, and was managing director of Costain-John Brown (later Constructors John Brown Ltd.) from 1948 until 1961; he has also served as member and chairman of the Building Research Board and the Coal Research Board, and became president of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1964. He will be succeeded as chairman of the C.E.I. by Mr. H. N. Pemberton, who has represented the Institute of Marine Engineers on the board of the C.E.I. since 1964. Mr. Pemberton has been a member of the Ministry of Power nuclear safety advisory committee and of the marine engineering and atomic energy committees of the British Ship Research Association, as well as vice-president of the Institute of Marine Engineers.

MR. H. J. BUNKER has been elected president of the Institute of Biology. Dr. T. G. Onions has been elected honorary secretary and Dr. J. A. Freeman honorary treasurer of the institute.

THE gold medals of the Royal Astronomical Society have been awarded to the following: PROFESSOR H. ALFVÉN, Royal Institute of Technology, Division of Plasma Physics, Stockholm, for his fundamental work on cosmical electrodynamics; DR. A. R. SANDAGE, Mount Wilson and Palomar Observatories, for his fundamental work on stellar evolution and the history of the galaxy, and in providing optical data basic to modern cosmology. The