

sponsor companies. The institute was founded in 1960 as a study centre for problems of overseas development, and as an independent advisory body on governmental and other aid. The subsequent establishment of the Ministry of Overseas Development has not, apparently, reduced the need for the institute as a propagandist. Today, more than ever, according to the director, the institute is swimming against the tide of political disenchantment.

The year has seen publications for research works on the French aid programme and on volunteers in development, as well as the first of a series of annual reports on British development policies. The institute seems to pay little attention to the particular problems of scientific aid, despite its all important role in helping developing countries. Its report gives the impression that what makes aid ineffective is inefficient administration in the programmes of donor countries, combined with lack of money. Giving, it would seem, has become a science, and how aid is given seems at least as important as what is given.

## Two Radiotelescopes

THE Dicke panel, set up by the National Science Foundation to decide what new radiotelescopes should be built in the United States, has decided that only two of the six proposals put before it should be accepted, and these two are the simplest and least expensive (see *Nature*, 215, 340; 1967). The panel's decisions, however, seem to be based on sound technical grounds and not because the Johnson administration had put pressure on it to economize in the interests of the war in Vietnam. One of the proposals accepted is for improving, at a cost of about \$3 million, the surface of the hemispherical 300 metre antenna at Arecibo, Puerto Rico, which is administered by Cornell University. This will increase the optimum frequency of the telescope from 68 cm (440 megacycles) to 10 cm (3,000 megacycles).

The other acceptable proposal is for the addition of seven 40 metre dish antennae to the one being built at Owens Valley, California, by California Institute of Technology. The total cost of this is estimated at \$15 million.

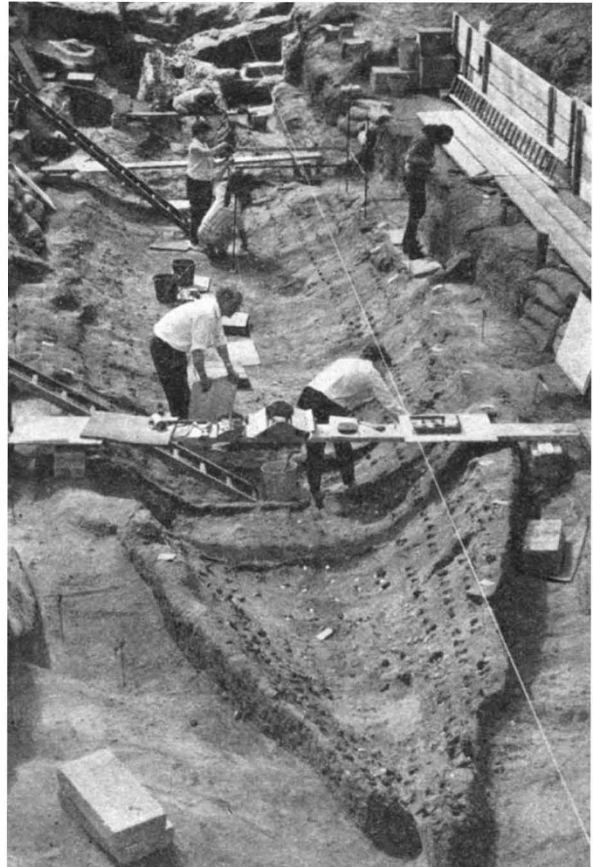
For the time being, the panel has suggested that the proposal for a fully steerable parabolic dish 135 metres in diameter put forward by the consortium of twelve universities in the north-east of the United States should be postponed for the time being, chiefly so as to allow an opportunity for experience of radiotelescopes fully enclosed in plastic radomes.

## Much about Meteorites

AN informative and attractive pamphlet *Meteorites—a concise account* by Dr A. A. Moss has just been published by the British Museum (Natural History) at 3s. There are, of course, several authoritative and expensive books on meteorites available to the specialist, but Dr Moss's pamphlet, giving as it does a succinct and very well illustrated account, is designed for the general reader. What is known of the origins, distribution, composition and structure of meteorites is clearly stated and no doubt it will surprise many readers to find that only twenty-one meteorites have fallen on the British Isles. Nothing remains of three of these, which

fell in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but with one exception the British Museum has material from all the others, including a rare iron meteorite which fell in 1876.

## The Sutton Hoo Ship



A photograph of the British Museum archaeologists re-excavating the Sutton Hoo Ship earlier this summer (see *Nature*, 215, 914; 1967).

## Butterflies Fluctuate

THERE has been some alarm about the declining populations of British butterflies such as the meadow brown, which in some places is reduced to one-third of its normal population. All grassland butterflies seem to be rarer this year than previously, but it is not yet certain whether this is more than a temporary decline, for the sizes of populations are often subject to considerable fluctuation from year to year. The adonis blue and common blue butterflies in a particular area may decline to two or three pairs in one season, and numbers may later increase again to two or three thousand. The adonis blue was almost completely removed from some places during the Second World War when tank tracks passed across its breeding ground, but after the tracks were taken away the butterflies recolonized the area and have continued to flourish. Another reason for diminished numbers in a particular area could be that like the silver studded butterfly the species concerned has suddenly moved to another habitat, perhaps between a quarter and half a mile away, after two or three years in one place.