

The title of professor has been conferred on the following: **Dr A. E. Kellie**, steroid biochemistry, in respect of his post at the **Middlesex Hospital Medical School, London**; **Dr B. McA. Sayers**, electrical engineering applied to medicine, in respect of his post at Imperial College; **Dr J. F. Soothill**, immunology, in respect of his post at the Institute of Child Health.

## Announcements

THE first annual meeting of the **Biological Council of Canada** was held in Ottawa on March 29 and the following officers were elected: *President*, **Dr W. H. Cook**, executive director of the National Research Council of Canada; *Vice-president*, **Dr J. A. F. Stevenson**, University of Western Ontario; *Secretary-Treasurer*, **Dr D. T. Canvin**, Queen's University.

The **International Meteorological Organization Prize**, which is awarded annually by the World Meteorological Organization for outstanding work in meteorology and in international collaboration, has been awarded to **Sir Graham Sutton**, formerly director general of the British Meteorological Office. The prize consists of a gold medal, \$1,200 and a diploma giving the citation of the award.

A new organization entitled **Organization of Tropical American Nematologists** has been established and its first formal meeting will be held in Sarasota, Florida, during December 3-6. Membership of OTAN is open to workers active in nematology who either work or have research projects in the American tropics or subtropics. Further information can be obtained from Dr A. Ayala, Department of Entomology, Agricultural Experiment Station, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico 00928.

## Meetings

July 1-5, **8th International Congress on Glass**, London (Organizing Committee, c/o Society of Glass Technology, Thornton, 20 Hallam Gate Road, Sheffield 10).

July 4-5, **Technological Forecasting**, Harrogate (Conference Secretary, University of Bradford Management Centre, Emm Lane, Bradford 9).

July 7-13, **8th International Congress of Gastroenterology**, Prague (Dr Zdenek Mafatka, Secretary-General of the Congress, Nemoenice Bulovka, Prague 8).

July 8-9, **Optics in Medicine and Biology**, University of Kent at Canterbury (The Meetings Officer, The Institute of Physics and the Physical Society, 47 Belgrave Square, London SW1).

July 8-18, **5th International Symposium on the Chemistry of Natural Products**, London (Secretary, 5th International Symposium on the Chemistry of Natural Products, c/o The Chemical Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1).

July 14-20, **International Institute of Welding Annual Assembly**, Warsaw (Polish Organizing Committee, Ul Krucza 36, Warsaw 53).

July 19, **Circulatory and Respiratory Physiology**, Imperial College (Mass Transport Symposium, Physiological Flow Studies Unit, Imperial College, Prince Consort Road, London SW7).

August 6-16, **9th International Congress of Soil Science**, Adelaide (Australian Organizing Committee, c/o CSIRO Waite Agricultural Research Institute, Adelaide).

September 9-12, **Hormones in Development**, University of Nottingham (Dr Max Hamburger, the City College of the City University, Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031).

ADDENDUM. The authors of the article "Crystallographic Determination of Symmetry of Aspartate Transcarbamylase" on page 1119 of this issue of *Nature* wish to add the following footnote: "The data presented in this paper are also compatible with a molecular point group of  $C_6 - 6$ ".

## CORRESPONDENCE

### Chemical and Biological Warfare

SIR,—A controversy has raged for some time in the United States over the propriety of scientific research dealing with chemical and biological warfare. We note that this issue has been discussed in Britain as well (*Nature*, 217, 799; 1968).

A recent symposium (April 4, 5, 9 and 10) in celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Fort Detrick, the US Army's biological warfare research centre, in the words of *Science* (160, 285; 1968) "has provoked sharp opposition in the biological community and suffered a boycott that is believed to be unparalleled in the recent stormy history of relationships between the military and the scientific community". Briefly, a group of scientists, on hearing of the announced symposium, jointly sponsored by Detrick and the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS), contacted colleagues who had been scheduled to speak at the symposium and urged them not to participate. The reasons for this request dealt with the immorality of biological weapons, the fact that the symposium, honouring Fort Detrick, lent chemical and biological warfare research an air of respectability and that the two topics of the symposium, while of general scientific interest, were of specific importance to the military. (The topics discussed were "Entry and Control of Foreign Nucleic Acid" and "Leaf Abscission". Results of studies dealing with the former can be used to create more efficient biological weapons, while research in abscission is directly related to plant defoliation.) As a result of this request, by personal reflexion or by the entreaties of other colleagues, sixteen scientists ultimately refused to give papers at the symposium. On April 9, a demonstration was held outside the gates of Fort Detrick opposing the symposium. The protesters included many of the scientists who had originally initiated the anti-Detrick action as well as some residents of Frederick, Maryland, where the fort is situated.

Another aspect of the controversy was highlighted by a recent action of the governing council of the American Society for Microbiology (*Science*, 160, 861; 1968). This body voted to dissolve an ASM advisory committee at Fort Detrick. Professor S. E. Luria, president of the ASM, in a speech to the society's recent annual meeting, said, "The ethical problems implicit in the association of a professional society with the defense establishment have always been present in the minds of the officers of the Society and have often been debated in its councils".

These actions reflect the antipathy felt by many American biological scientists toward biological warfare research.

Sincerely yours,

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