

According to R. M. Field (*China Quarterly*, No. 38, 158; 1969), if these figures are based on census data, they must date from the registration that took place during the summer of 1964. According to the projections and estimates prepared by Dr J. S. Aird, of the US Bureau of the Census, the Chinese population in 1968 was probably between 754 and 793 million and the rate of growth is probably greater than 1.5 per cent per year.

## CANCER

### A Collaborative Network

THE International Agency for Research on Cancer, which was established in 1965 within the framework of the WHO, is nearing the end of its first quinquennium and before the end of this year the governing body has to raise the funds for the next quinquennium. At present the agency, which is housed in temporary accommodation in Lyons, runs on a modest annual budget of between \$1.6 and \$1.7 million, collected as ten annual contributions of \$150,000 from the nine participating states and from the WHO itself. With the prospect of a new fourteen storey block in Lyons, to house its administration, library and laboratories, which is being paid for by the French Government, the Département du Rhône and the city of Lyons, the agency should be in a strong position not only to obtain renewed subscriptions from its nine members (Australia, France, Israel, Italy, Holland, Britain, West Germany, the USA and the USSR) but also to recruit some new members.

When the agency was set up to foster international research on cancer it very wisely decided not to duplicate laboratory work but to concentrate on problems that demand an international approach. With its limited budget it settled for programmes of cancer epidemiology and environmental cancer biology and a fellowship scheme. And the initial fears, which may account for the short list of member states, that the agency would draw off manpower and money from national cancer research institutes, have proved groundless. As the recently published annual report for 1968 says, the agency has repeatedly had to turn down, because of lack of funds, suggestions for international collaboration from national institutes, but it has been able to contract out specific research projects with national laboratories giving emphasis to work in the underdeveloped countries. For example, the agency is sponsoring cancer registries in Malawi, Tanzania, Singapore and Kenya. Many of its other contracts with laboratories in underdeveloped countries are for research on the epidemiology of locally prevalent forms of cancer while work done in the industrialized countries is chiefly on environmental carcinogens such as asbestos and N-nitroso compounds.

One of the aims of the agency is to act as a neutral organization through which governments can collaborate on problems that have either economic or political overtones and are the subject of strong lobbying. The agency is making and publicizing, for example, such unwelcome discoveries as the correlation between high rates of oesophageal cancer in Brittany and the large consumption of Calvados, and the presence of the carcinogen diethylnitrosamine in Malawi gin. But the work of the agency is not all a matter of developing a collaborative network among existing national insti-

tutes and correlating the epidemiology of cancer. It has some laboratories in its temporary building and plans for more in its new home, where work on viral and chemical carcinogenesis, for example, will be extended.

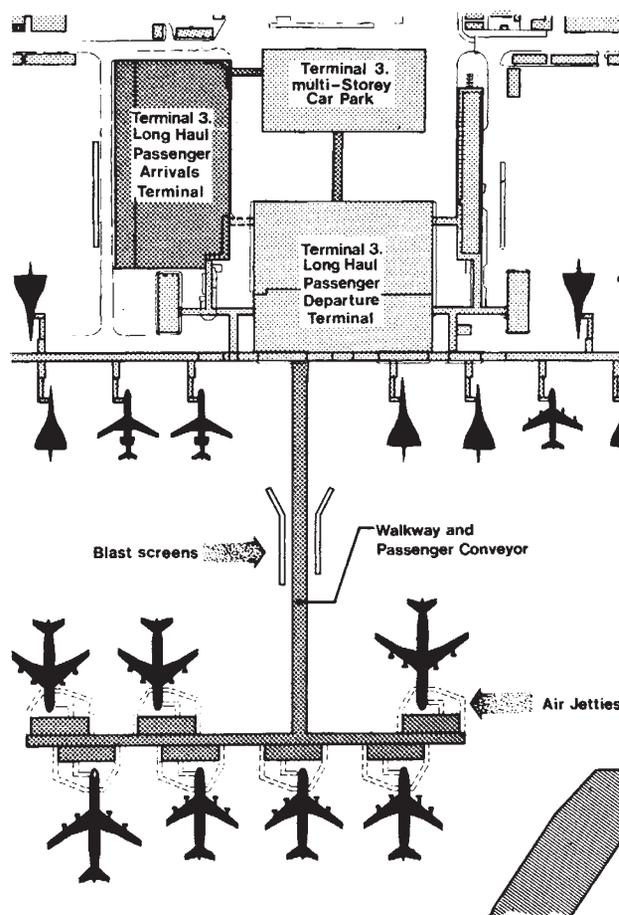
The other string to the agency's bow is the organization of international meetings—there were seven in 1968—and the fellowship and training scheme. The number of applicants for both travel and research training fellowships is increasing by between 30 and 50 per cent a year and, in contrast to the rest of the work of the agency, emphasis in the fellowship programme is not on epidemiology but on cell biology, biochemistry and virology.

## AIRPORTS

### No Exit from London

AN annual increase of 13–14 per cent in passenger traffic at Heathrow London Airport is expected from the introduction of the Boeing 747 jets next April. These aircraft, which are having their final tests at the end of this year, will each carry an average of 350 passengers. The first 747s will belong to Pan American, TWA and BOAC, but by 1973 there will be 250 of them arriving at Heathrow each week, so that the number of passengers will be about 23 million, almost double the 1968 figure of 13.7 million.

To accommodate this increase, the British Airports Authority has planned £12.5 million worth of additions and extensions to the existing Heathrow facilities,



Heathrow Airport, London. South-west terminal expansion.