

to figures released by the West German Ministry of Scientific Research last week. The first table compares the actual expenditure with that envisaged in the 1967 programme, and the second shows how the Government's scientific budget has actually been divided between the different sciences and technologies.

Table 1. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (millions of Deutschmarks)

Year	Actual	Per cent increase (over previous year)	Allocation (over July 1967)	Per cent increase (over previous year)
1968	1,922.3	19.9	1,930	20.4
1969	2,141.2	11.4	2,220	15.0
1970			2,550	14.9
1971			2,940	15.3

Table 2. BREAKDOWN OF 1969 FEDERAL EXPENDITURE ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (millions of Deutschmarks)

General Scientific Research	1,020.8	
Universities and technical colleges		700.0
Government research establishments		127.1
Max Planck institutes		131.8
Oceanography		6.2
Other items		55.7
Nuclear Research and Technology	709.5	
Nuclear research centres		285.6
Work outside nuclear centres		343.2
International organizations		78.3
Documentation		2.4
Research on Space and Air Transport	351.2	
Extraterrestrial research		24.5
Satellites, etc.		53.4
Basic programmes and international organizations		273.3
Data Processing and New Technologies	90.8	
Data processing		73.7
New technologies		17.1

The funds actually allocated for scientific research this year are some DM 80 million less than had been foreseen in 1967. One of the explanations is that federal expenditure on universities and technical colleges has not risen as steeply as had been intended. Whether any modification of the overall scientific research programme will be called for in the light of the latest figures remains to be seen, but considerably more money will have to be earmarked for scientific research for the next two years to keep in line with the ministry's forecast of an average growth of expenditure of 16 per cent between 1968 and 1971.

ROYAL SOCIETY

More Foreign Relations

THE Royal Society can boast that it had a Foreign Secretary long before the British Government. The society's continuing involvement in international affairs is now described in a progress report by the

Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society (London: The Royal Society, 1969). There are now more than forty committees and subcommittees handling the society's international affairs, and together they account for more than a third of the budget. Contact with the National Academy of Sciences in Washington is close, but there are already many agencies devoted to cooperation across the North Atlantic and perhaps more important has been the Royal Society's recent ventures in Europe and elsewhere. The European science exchange programme has now been under way for two years, a programme in which every nation of Western Europe is cooperating. The Royal Society contributed £200,000 to the scheme in 1968, and hopes to give £250,000 this year. The money is spent on visiting fellowships, both junior and senior, and also on research conferences, modelled on the lines of the American Gordon Conferences.

The scheme is happily free of bureaucracy as it is, but even so the Royal Society is considering the possibility that science might be better served if its own scheme was merged with ventures like the EMBO fellowship programme. Meanwhile, separate agreements have been framed for exchanges with Israel and several countries of Eastern Europe. The Eastern European programme has been bedevilled to a certain extent by administrative difficulties, but there is a good chance that there will be greater flexibility in the future.

The Royal Society acts as the British member of the International Council of Scientific Unions, a task that grows more onerous as the activities of ICSU proliferate. The International Union of Nutritional Sciences was admitted to ICSU in 1968, so that there are now sixteen unions in membership, each entailing much routine administrative work. The Assembly of ICSU last year discussed a proposal to set up a committee on the social implications of science, but action was shelved pending the planned investigation of the topic by various agencies of the United Nations.

A sector of the world still without formal scientific ties with Britain is South America. The Royal Society sent a delegation to Brazil, Mexico and Cuba last year, and a reciprocal visit is planned. There is every likelihood that a planned series of exchanges will be set up with these and other South American countries before long. Nearer home, the closing two-culture gap is claiming the society's attention. Most European national academies cover both the sciences and the humanities, and it is natural that the increasing British cooperation with these academies should suggest the possibility of liaison between the Royal Society and the British Academy. As a first step the two bodies have planned a joint symposium later this year on the use of radioactive dating in archaeology. Similarly, the British National Committee for Geography has suggested that some needs of the subject would be better satisfied by the formation of a new committee including members from both the society and the academy.

TECHNOLOGY

When Britain led the World

THIS year is the bicentenary of the granting of patents for two inventions which played a crucial part in making Britain the most important nineteenth century indus-