

in routine analyses of East Anglian seals. As far as the effluent from Nancekuke is concerned, Mr Bonner finds that the standard of treatment is high enough to leave the Ministry of Defence wholly blameless.

Why then did so many seals die last year? One possibility is that the initial publicity encouraged more people than usual to report the dead seals they had seen—in most years there are eight or nine reports of pups in difficulties, but dead seals are usually ignored because nothing can be done for them. Some pups may have been driven to Cornwall from the colonies in Pembrokeshire during periods of strong winds in early November, and bad weather would in any case bring about heavy mortality among the seals which breed on the inhospitable Cornish coast. Extraneous factors thus seem unnecessary for an adequate explanation, and natural causes can also account for lesions seen on the necks of four adult seals at the same time, because seals often fight during the breeding season and receive wounds which can become infected.

Only about sixty to seventy-five pups are born in Cornwall each year, so the mortality rate seems to have been very high indeed. A tour of the breeding localities in December, however, revealed at least six young seals, of which all but one appeared perfectly healthy, and allowing for those which would have been hidden away in caves or other inaccessible parts of the coast a fair survival of pups seems likely.

EDUCATION

Soviet Students Better Prepared

from our Soviet Correspondent

THE new academic year always receives massive coverage in the Soviet press. This year, the last of the current five-year plan, the opening of schools and universities has been even more extensively reported than usual. The implementation of the resolutions of the twenty-third party congress must be discussed and tentative proposals made for the forthcoming twenty-fourth congress.

The expansion of higher education was one of the chief policies of the twenty-third congress. According to the Soviet Minister of Education, Comrade V. P. Elyutin, during the past five years 48 new higher education establishments have been opened in the Soviet Union, including eight universities, fifteen technical-engineering institutes, an institute of electronic technology (in Moscow) and several other specialized institutes and polytechnics. Special emphasis is placed on the training of young specialists for the new professions, such as automation and cybernetics, or in those subjects, such as geology, which have a particular importance in Soviet planning policies.

Recent educational directives and laws have been aimed at providing higher education for young people with a good work record in factory or collective farm, and for ex-servicemen. Special training schools have been established to prepare them for university entrance, and accordingly they are well-represented in the 900,000 new students entering Soviet universities and institutes of higher education. (Of this 900,000, half a million are full time students, and the remainder will be attending part-time and evening courses.) Presumably as a result of the establishing of these training schools, the Minister says that the general educational level of the new students has risen considerably.

FOUNDATIONS

Mr Young's Last Year

THE Nuffield Foundation this week published its last annual report under the directorship of Mr Brian Young, who takes up his appointment next month as Director-General of the Independent Television Authority. Mr Young's departure, after six years with the Nuffield Foundation, comes at the end of a year in which the foundation awarded nearly 100 new research grants worth more than £1.3 million. Most of the grants were awarded in accordance with policies established during the past few years.

In scientific research, for example, the emphasis was on biology—£250,476 was allocated to biological research compared with £16,946 to other scientific research. The foundation defends such a bias on the grounds that "the physical sciences, and technology, are already more lavishly provided for, yet it may well be that the greater needs—not only in terms of money but with the over-all benefit to society in mind—may lie in biology".

Again following the pattern set by previous years, the foundation's educational programme was given the largest share of the foundation's grants in 1969, but attention is now being directed chiefly towards higher education. This in part reflects the success of the Nuffield-sponsored schools curriculum projects during the 1960s, which have led to a change in the nature of the university and college student intake. A grant of £80,000 has been awarded to five universities—Bath, Birmingham, Glasgow, London (Chelsea and Queen Elizabeth Colleges) and Sussex—to collaborate on a project designed to produce new teaching materials for undergraduates in the biological sciences. Two grants were also awarded in 1969 for research in the field of teacher training, one of which is aimed to prepare science teachers for the new types of secondary school curricula—many of them associated with the foundation's own Science Teaching Project.

As far as the social sciences are concerned, the foundation continued last year to back people rather than programmes. For example, Professor A. J. Brown of the University of Leeds was given a grant of £8,250 for work on regional economics, Professor Max Gluckman of the University of Manchester was given a grant to relieve him of the commitments of regular teaching and administration so that he can devote more time to studies of comparative politics and law, and Professor Sir Karl Popper has been given a grant to carry on with his studies after his retirement from the chair of logic and scientific method at the London School of Economics.

Table 1. NUFFIELD FOUNDATION GRANT ALLOCATIONS 1969

	Total allocations	Allocations 1969
Science		
Biological research	2,967,397	250,476
Other scientific research	1,690,624	16,694
Medicine	4,671,890	113,493
Social research	3,562,011	200,516
Education	4,372,137	303,787
Care of aged	2,058,636	115,339
Commonwealth	3,857,393	83,750
Fellowships and scholarships	3,114,075	186,430
Recoverable grants	270,400	32,500
Total	26,564,563	1,303,237