These conclusions have led the committee to recommend that the use of DDT be phased out, but that it remains available for the control of disease bearing insects at least until satisfactory alternatives have been developed — a conclusion that has already been interpreted by the court of appeals as calling for suspension of the pesticide, and by some manufacturers as an acceptance of their thesis that DDT is the safest pesticide to use in most applications. Although the days for DDT in the United States are clearly numbered, there is no sign as yet that it will be allowed to pass peacefully.

MANPOWER

# A Modest Plan

by our Washington Correspondent

THE Department of Labor has put up $3 million to help find work for highly qualified scientists and engineers who are at present swelling the ranks of the unemployed. The money will be used to establish internships in federally funded laboratories for some 420 young unemployed scientists and engineers who hold advanced degrees. A brainchild of the Office of Science and Technology and the Department of Labor, the scheme is being administered by the National Science Foundation, and it is expected to swing into action in the near future.

The idea was sketched out in a memorandum addressed to all directors of federally funded laboratories with more than 100 professional staff on their payroll, sent out last week by Raymond L. Bisplinghoff, acting director of the NSF. It explained that the foundation will provide $7,000 to pay the salary of each intern on a one year non-renewable basis, provided that the laboratory at least matches that sum to supplement the salary and to meet overhead costs. Laboratory directors have been asked to furnish the NSF with an estimate of the number of internships which can fruitfully be used to the mutual advantage of the laboratory and the intern, and the foundation will parcel out 420 internships on a first-come first-served basis. Interns will then be recruited by the laboratory with preference being given to veterans and those from areas of particularly high unemployment, which in general means areas in which defence and aerospace industries are concentrated.

Edward E. David, the President's science adviser, said last week that he hoped that the interns would be employed in positions "where they can best benefit the nation and themselves" —projects concerned with pollution, rubbish disposal, nuclear energy and the like. But the NSF memorandum made no mention of any constraints on the type of project except that care should be taken "in assigning interns to tasks which will improve their potential for later job placement".

The scheme is an offshoot of a $42 million programme launched by the Department of Labor in April to help find work for scientists, engineers and technicians thrown out of work by cutbacks in the defence and aerospace industries. The thrust of the programme is to provide retraining for about 10,000 people who have a strong possibility of being employed by specific employers, relocation grants for scientists and engineers who find employment out of their home area, and to set up a national registry to help match jobless engineers with job openings. These facilities are limited to applicants from fourteen areas particularly hard hit by unemployment, unlike the internships scheme, which is limited neither by the area in which the applicant is living, nor by his previous employment. One reason for the difference between the schemes may be that the NSF has been able to dictate the terms of the internship project.

The new initiative by the Administration in trying to find employment for some of the jobless scientists and engineers is probably a measure of the political embarrassment in having expensively produced graduates in the dole queues during election year. But the internship scheme is hardly likely to be a decisive influence on the problem, for according to a survey conducted by the NSF, some 4,000 scientists and engineers holding a master's degree or a doctorate were out of work in the spring of this year.

# Short Notes

## FAS on the Attack

THE Federation of American Scientists has launched a stinging attack on the F-14 carrier-based aircraft programme. A statement issued by the FAS describes the programme as "a purposeless, enormously expensive, gold-plated procurement scandal dependent on a missile that may not work; its only hope is to become a *fait accompli*". The idea of the programme is to provide about 300 aircraft to serve on carriers in "high threat areas", in an effort to protect them from enemy action, but the FAS—which has in the past been a consistent critic of federal arms policy—suggests that carrier-launched attacks are unlikely to be effective in Soviet wars, and that land-based aircraft are unquestionably superior in terms of both capability and cost.

The military appropriations request for 1972 is for $1,034 million for 48 aircraft—a figure which the FAS points out would result in a cost for 300 aircraft of $6,000 million, allowing for research and development on the first batch. "It is a self-evident distortion of priorities to give carriers marginally improved abilities to do a largely unnecessary and hopeless job," the FAS tartly states. The federation also calls the procurement of the F-14 a scandal because the House of Representatives has had no chance to debate the programme. It charges that the chairman of the Armed Services Committee held back the procurement request pending a review by Mr Packard, Deputy Secretary of Defense, of the number of aircraft to be bought, but long before the conference committee report is debated, the Administration will sign a contract for production of 48 aircraft.

## Davis lashes OMB

JOHN W. DAVIS, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Research and Development, has lashed the Office of Management and Budget's decision to impound $30 million of the National Science Foundation's funds for support of science education. The OMB's action, which has already led to the abrupt resignation of Lloyd Humphries, an assistant director of the NSF, was cited by Davis in a letter to President Nixon as likely to endanger the "long run health of American science". Davis asked Mr Nixon to take immediate steps to remedy the OMB's action. The subcommittee on Research and Development specifically increased the NSF's budget authorization for science education, and it is naturally chary of having its work negated by a decision of the Office of Management and Budget, taken behind closed doors.

## Aggressive Bees

A COMMITTEE of the National Research Council has been set up to plan methods to cope with the possible intrusion into Central and North America of a particularly aggressive strain of honey bee. The bee was accidentally introduced into South America 15 years ago during experiments designed to breed into the ordinary domestic bee the extraordinary work capacity of the African honey bee *Apis mellifera adansonii*. Unfortunately, however, the African bee, which has a painful sting and will sometimes attack when unprovoked, escaped and spread rapidly over South America. Beekeepers in North America fear that if the African bee spreads to North America, its viciousness might lead to demands for eradication of all bees near urban communities.