

Lerner was dismissed from all his professional positions in October last year soon after he applied for a visa to emigrate to Israel. Until then he had been Director of the Department of Large Scale Systems of the Institute of Control Sciences, and a Professor at the Scientific and Technical University in Moscow.

According to scientific colleagues in the West, Lerner's dismissal from the institute and the university came after two months of abortive attempts to obtain a visa to emigrate. Early in September, his relatives in Israel sent him an invitation to emigrate there, but the letter was intercepted and never reached Lerner. On September 16, Lerner was asked by Academician Trapeznikov, Director of the Institute of Control Sciences, to explain the letter, and Trapeznikov called in directors of all the departments and laboratories of the institute and informed them of the invitation.

Towards the end of October, however, Lerner received a duplicate copy of the invitation, and went ahead with a formal application for a visa. (A letter of invitation is required before application can be made.) Soon after that, he was dismissed from the institute and the university and prevented from teaching. His son, who was also working at the Institute of Control Sciences, was also fired.

So far, a number of letters of protest written to Academician Keldysh, President of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, by Soviet and Western scientists have failed to get Lerner permission to emigrate.

UNEMPLOYMENT

Prescription Needed

by our Washington Correspondent

At this time of year, industrial talent scouts usually start to comb the campuses for promising potential graduates to sign up. But this year, like last, is seeing a marked drop in the number of recruitment officers on campuses, and most of those who are seeking new talent say that they have fewer jobs to offer than usual. The prospects are once again that the supply of educated manpower coming out of the universities this year will exceed the demand, and in spite of predictions from the Department of Labor that in the 1970s as a whole college output will match the number of jobs available, an increasing number of critics are urging that the government should adopt a policy to prevent the present manpower crisis from developing into a chronic unemployment situation.

One forceful advocate for policies for educated manpower is Eli Ginzberg, professor of economics and director of the Conservation of Human

Resources Project at Columbia University. Writing in the winter 1972 issue of *Public Interest**, Ginzberg warns that "there is no reason to believe that the economic recovery will have a major effect in absorbing all those now looking for positions as well as those who will be coming into the market". He bases this suggestion on the fact that there is likely to be little change of direction in the federal budget, and that the precarious financial position of many colleges and universities will cause them to cut down on the hiring of new staff. Private industry is therefore the chief remaining source of demand for education manpower, and this, Ginzberg suggests, will not grow sufficiently to take up the slack from the public sector.

One constant pressure to alleviate the manpower situation is to reduce the supply—the federal government has already cut back on student support, and New York State has recently placed a one-year moratorium on

approval of new doctoral programmes. But Ginzberg warns that "we can no longer rely on the decision making of individuals, the blind responses of the educational system to pressures for admission and the cues of the market to provide the country with the educated manpower it needs and to assure that it will be effectively deployed".

What is needed, he suggests, is a long-term policy for federal support of science with regard to both level and rate of growth—since the federal share of the research and development budget is about 60 per cent, erratic fluctuations lead to serious manpower distortions—a policy for support of higher education that will keep solvent the 100 or so chief university centres and provide support for graduate students, and to take account in federal budget-making of the manpower implications of big projects.

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Short Notes

Interracial Living

A REPORT published by the National Research Council—the operating arm of the National Academy of Sciences—suggests that Americans are becoming more racially tolerant. The report suggests that the proportion of white Americans who say they would not mind having black neighbours has more than doubled between 1942 and 1968 (from 35 per cent to 76 per cent), and that "for both blacks and whites the quality and convenience of housing and neighbourhood services take precedence over racial prejudice in housing decisions". But in the same breath, the report points out that a smaller proportion of minority groups now live in racially mixed neighbourhoods than was the case thirty years ago. The reason for the paradox, the report suggests, is that white Americans attribute class characteristics to race, and integration is hindered because of class prejudice rather than racial prejudice. "It is this racial perception and not race *per se* that leads to resistance", the report notes. In other words, integrated housing is still hindered by prejudice. (Report of the Advisory Committee to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, National Academy of Science.)

Scientists for McGovern

A small group of scientists, headed by four Nobel Laureates, has formed an organization to assist Senator George McGovern's bid for the Presidency of the United States. In a statement issued last week, the group charged that the present Administra-

tion's handling of science and technology is "obtuse, incompetently managed, distorted by political motives and wasteful of expert resources". The group cites in particular the shuttle as a pointless waste of resources, and urges more international cooperation on such research as fusion technology and solar power. Scientists for George McGovern, as the group is called, plans to support the campaign by providing technical advice, and by soliciting support from fellow scientists. The Nobel Laureates associated with the group are O. Chamberlain, S. E. Luria, A. Szent-Gyorgyi and George Wald.

Mansfield Opposes Shuttle

Senator Mike Mansfield, Senate majority leader, has thrown his considerable political weight behind the movement to oppose funding for the space shuttle. Calling the project "a misplacing of priorities", Mansfield said that the "public is a good deal smarter than it is given credit for being".

Marine Pollution

The Ocean Affairs Board of the National Research Council has put forward a plea for urgent studies to be made of toxic materials, particularly polychlorinated biphenyls, heavy metals and radionuclides, and their impact on the marine environment. Emphasizing the fact that concern about the environment is not matched by adequate research and information gathering, the board recommends five chief areas of study: identification and routes of harmful materials; dispersal; biological and geochemical transfer, effects on man and other life organisms, and sites of final deposition.