

are eager for a convention as soon as possible, if only to head off the animal lobby's more extreme demands. Some, such as the United Kingdom, have already delayed national legislation pending a convention. Britain's Conservative government now has little more than two years in which to fulfill its last election promise to update the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1876. Two recent private members' bills to do just that have already come to grief. **Judy Redfearn**

## French reorganization

### Sector structure

#### Grenoble

Jean-Pierre Chevènement, Minister for Science and Technology in France, has finally decided on the structure and organization of his ministry. He has re-accumulated all the instruments and organizations of science and technology policy — dispersed since de Gaulle last had a major science ministry — and sorted them into a new structure.

The Delegation-Générale à la Recherche Scientifique et Technique, which acted as the relatively small office of the previous science minister, is to be disbanded and its staff re-absorbed. The same fate awaits the Délégation à l'Innovation et à la Technologie (which previously worked within the Ministry of Industry).

The new structure is claimed to be something midway between the highly dispersed "Rothschild" system of the United Kingdom in which individual ministries have control of large sums of research money which they can spend with research councils broadly as they wish, and the highly centralized German system; but the Chevènement structure is on the face of it considerably closer to the German than the British model.

The ministry will be divided into three sectors (plus the cabinet of personal advisers, which will be extended with the addition of a section to evaluate the progress of his policies). There will be a "Direction de la Politique Générale", which, broadly speaking, will administer basic science through the "grands organismes" (the Centre National de la Recherche etc); a "Direction du Développement Scientifique et Technique et de l'Innovation" which will actively promote contacts between science and industry and mastermind the scientific renovation of the French economy (the matter closest to Chevènement's heart); and a high-flying "Mission Scientifique et Technique". This body, headed by Yves Farges, a one-time solid-state physicist and the principal advocate for a European synchrotron radiation source, will act as a kind of interface between the other two sectors and the minister himself.

The staff of the ministry at present numbers some 250. By the time the changes are complete — and the ministry has moved to a new location on the Montagne Ste-

Geneviève (the old site of the Ecole Polytechnique) the staff will probably have grown to 400.

**Robert Walgate**

## Scientific fraud

### In Bristol now

A further case of falsification in the scientific literature has come to light. The following letter has been received from Dr M. J. Purves of the Department of Physiology at the University of Bristol:

SIR — I very much regret to have to report that data published in the proceedings of the 28th International Congress of Physiological Sciences (Purves, M.J. 1981 Cerebral Blood Flow and Metabolism in the Sheep Fetus. *Advances in Physiological Sciences* 9: 199; 126. Pergamon, Oxford & Adademiai Kiado, Budapest) are false. I must also emphasize that none of my colleagues was involved in the preparation of this paper and the responsibility was mine alone.

Bristol, UK

M.J. PURVES

Dr Purves, a reader at the University of Bristol, resigned his post with effect from 1 November after an internal investigation.

The paper concerned describes the use of recently developed techniques for investigating the function of the mammalian (sheep) brain *in utero*. The article describes the use of 5-deoxyglucose as an index of metabolic activity in central nervous metabolism. One of the objectives of the study was to demonstrate that 5-deoxyglucose (not metabolized in the usual way) is taken up more slowly by the fetal mammalian brain during periods when the embryo is asleep.

The University of Bristol seems to have acted quickly since some of Dr Purves's junior colleagues drew attention to the irreproducible features of his published paper earlier in the year. An agreed announcement of the circumstances was delayed for family reasons. Dr Purves said earlier this week that the falsifications consist of the data published. His senior colleagues say that they cannot understand why such a talented person, well-supported by the Wellcome Foundation and the Public Health Services, should have followed such a course.

### Erratum

Nature must apologise to one or other (or both) of Sir Andrew Huxley (President of the Royal Society) and Professor T.R.E. Southwood that the latter's photograph appeared last week in place of the former's. The Royal Society's anniversary celebrations this year appear to have been especially prone to accident — the President of the Fellowship of Engineering, half-way through an impassioned speech on the importance of engineering, referred to the present President's predecessor-but-one, Dr A.L. Hodgkin, as Professor Hodgkinson.

## Primitive life in France

### Paris

The life and times of Europe's earliest inhabitants form the focus of a new exhibition at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris. The exhibition, which opened on 9 December and will run until April 1983, illustrates major advances in human development over more than a million years of European prehistory.

Evidence of human presence beginning with what are reputed to be the oldest stone tools in Europe is traced up to the appearance of fully evolved Neanderthals some 125,000 years ago. Remains from more than 100 sites in 13 European countries are on view, combined with replica living floors and two reconstructions of palaeolithic shelters.

The main advance portrayed in the exhibition, according to Professor Henry de Lumley, exhibition organizer and director of the Laboratory of Prehistory and the museum, is the domestication of fire in Europe some 400,000 years ago. By 300,000 years ago distinct cultures throughout Europe possessed knowledge of fire, were making various tool assemblages, living in organized encampments and hunting in groups.

By this time too, early Europeans had apparently begun to construct more elaborate living shelters with several distinct areas. The remains of two such living floors from sites excavated by Professor de Lumley provide the basis for the striking hypothetical recreations of a hut from Terra Amata and a cave shelter at Le Lazaret (both near Nice in France).



The Terra Amata hut is built from wood poles and pine branches on a replica rocky Mediterranean shore and is based on remains dated at about 380,000 years ago. The Le Lazaret cave shelter suggests an even more comfortable lifestyle by about 130,000 years ago.

Specialists may well debate the interpretation of the stones, bones, dates and reconstructions in this exhibition, but all visitors will go away with a lasting impression of how prehistorians recreate the past and what daily life might have been like for Europe's earliest inhabitants.

**Richard Dreiman**