its high energy the Serpukhov synchrotron produces especially large numbers of antiparticles. In the crowd some antiprotons and antineutrons might be shielded from ordinary matter long enough to form an antihelium 3 nucleus.

From the products that resulted when the synchrotron's proton beam struck a target, magnetic fields segregated those with two units of negative electric charge, the appropriate amount for an antihelium nucleus. These particles were then analyzed to find those with the right mass. Five were found among 200 billion particles examined.

The significance of the discovery, according to Dr. Bernard Hildebrand of the Atomic Energy Commission, is that it shows that the matter-antimatter symmetry works for systems made of three bodies as it does for two-body systems like antideuterium. The forces in a system of three or more bodies have a much higher order of complexity than the forces in a two-body system. In a two-body system each particle is pulled in only one direction, but when three or more components are present, each particle is pulled in several directions. A three-body antinucleus proves that forces of this level of complexity can exist in antimatter enhancing the possibility that heavy antinuclei might exist. □

NEWSBRIEFS

Abortion; Thermal pollution

Although a number of legal challenges to the constitutionality of abortion laws are under way (SN: 1/17, p. 75), the Supreme Court is still keeping silent on the issue. This week the Supreme Court declined to review a decision of the California Supreme Court invalidating a California abortion law. The California court had ruled that the law, which permitted abortion only when "necessary to preserve life," was unconstitutionally vague.

Without waiting for the Supreme Court, the Hawaii state legislature last week passed a new law allowing women in early pregnancy to have an abortion for any reason. □

A Florida power company was warned this week that its plans for disposal of heated water from two nuclear power plants must be held in abeyance.

The warning is the first major Federal move against thermal pollution alone.

The Federal Water Pollution Control Administration action involves a Florida Light and Power Co. canal to carry effluent into Card Sound, an arm of Biscayne Bay near Miami, where there have already been indications of damage from thermal pollution. □