

MANPOWER

Biologists' Morale Down

The shortage of qualified, trained scientists is not limited to one science, reports a group of biologists. Discriminating against biologists can injure our national prestige.

► THE NATION'S biologists are fighting mad at the U. S. Civil Service Commission.

In a letter to President Eisenhower, Dr. Hiden T. Cox, executive director of the American Institute of Biological Sciences, charged that the Commission is making biologists into second-class scientists, destroying morale, and seriously injuring the national defense effort.

The biologists are up in arms because the Commission has announced pay increases for scientists employed by the Federal Government but excluding some 28,000 biologists on the Federal payroll. The pay boosts went to physicists, mathematicians, engineers, some chemists and a number of technologists.

Conspicuously missing from the Christmas list were biologists, agriculturists and bacteriologists.

Protests by biologists have already resulted in the first faint reappraisal, Dr. Cox noted, and the Commission is currently studying the availability of biologists and the salary scales paid by industry and academic institutions.

Only four months ago, at the AIBS annual meeting in Palo Alto, Calif., Dr. H. Bentley Glass of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md., predicted in the principal address that biologists are on the verge of discoveries equal to the "revolu-

tionary and potentially devastating kind" that led to the production of atomic weapons and intercontinental missiles. (See SNL, Sept. 7, 1957, p. 157.)

In Dr. Cox's letter to the President, which was also sent to Dr. James R. Killian; the Secretaries of Defense, Agriculture, Commerce, Health, Education and Welfare, and Interior; the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission; and the Chairmen of the House and Senate Committees on Civil Service, Government Operations and Agriculture, it specifically charged:

1. Although there may be no serious quantity shortage of biologists at present, there are growing shortages in some areas and shortages of qualified persons in almost all areas.

2. The Civil Service Commission action is discriminatory and makes second-class scientists out of biologists. The discrimination is not only financial, but against the prestige and importance of biologists.

3. A lowering of morale among Federally employed biologists is already evident.

4. The effect of the Commission's action promises to seriously injure the future recruitment of promising biology students.

5. Science must advance in all fields, not in just a few. Artificially stimulating certain areas, even for political expediency, is extremely shortsighted.

The American Institute of Biological Sciences is composed of 38 biological societies and represents more than 55,000 of the nation's biologists.

Science News Letter, January 11, 1958

ASTRONOMY

Radar Spots Auroras In Southern Hemisphere

► RADAR has been used to spot auroras, the shimmering heavenly displays known as the northern or southern lights, for the first time from the Southern Hemisphere, two New Zealand scientists report.

Average height of the auroras, radar echoes showed, is 66 miles above the earth's surface, they say in *Nature* (Dec. 28, 1957). Drs. R. S. Unwin and M. Gadsden of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Awarua Radio, Invercargill, New Zealand, report their observations, part of the International Geophysical Year program, could be correlated with visual auroras only twice because of cloudy conditions.

Science News Letter, January 11, 1958

ARCHAEOLOGY

Early Indian Art Saved From Path of Construction

► A PIPE, beautifully carved some 3,000 years ago by prehistoric Adena Indians has been salvaged from the path of the bulldozer through the cooperation of an industrial corporation with the Smithsonian Institution.

The pipe, which is made from Ohio limestone, is in the form of the head and neck of a shoveler duck with characteristic duck bill, eyes and slits for nostrils. A series of fine incised lines on the underside of the bill represent the lamellae typical of the shoveler duck. The limestone from which the pipe is made is relatively soft and easy to carve when freshly dug from the ground. After exposure to the air the stone becomes hard and brittle.

The beautiful pipe was found when a famous West Virginia mound, the Welcome mound, was excavated under the direction of Dr. Frank M. Setzler of the National Museum. The mound lay in the path of industrial development in the rapidly growing industrial area between Wheeling and Huntington, W. Va.

Although a bulldozer could have leveled the 100,000 cubic feet of earth in a couple of days to prepare the ground for new construction, the Columbia-Southern Chemical Corporation recognized that the mound might contain priceless archaeological material and requested the assistance of the Smithsonian.

In addition to the pipe, three adult human skeletons were found buried in the mound. The bodies had been placed on, and covered with, several layers of what appeared to be oak bark. Acidity from the bark had decomposed all perishable objects buried with the dead and even the bones were hardly more than imprints in the earth.

Science News Letter, January 11, 1958



PREHISTORIC PIPE — *This intricately carved pipe, in the form of a shoveler duck's bill, was found in excavating a burial mound of the Adena Indians. The fine incised lines representing the lamellae typical of this species of duck's bill can be seen in the bottom photograph of the underside of the bill.*