**Letters**

**Antarctic Research**

The National Science Foundation has expressed to Science the view that articles on the Antarctic research program appearing in recent issues, specifically those of 25 December and 1 January, do not by themselves fully reflect the international and organizational aspects of the program. For purposes of clarification, therefore, Science is glad to give the following summary of information which has appeared from time to time in earlier issues.

During the International Geophysical Year, the Special Committee for the International Geophysical Year (CSAGI) noted the need for continuing research efforts in the Antarctic beyond the termination of the IGY. A committee was therefore organized under the ICSU, to be known as the Special Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR). The committee comprises representatives of the 12 nations supporting research in the Antarctic, together with representatives of the scientific unions with research interests in that area. The purpose of the committee is to give advice and make recommendations with respect to research problems in the Antarctic that it feels should be pursued. The committee is cooperating with another member committee of ICSU—namely, the Special Committee on Oceanographic Research (SCOR)—on problems of mutual interest. SCAR also submits its resolutions and research programs to nonmember countries to encourage their participation in new programs or in the maintenance of the Antarctic stations which might otherwise be abandoned. SCAR has held three meetings to date: at The Hague in February 1958, in Moscow in August 1958, and in Canberra in March 1959. The next meeting will be held in Cambridge, England, in August 1960. The organization and operations of the committee are reported in detail in *ICSU Review* [1, No. 4 (Oct. 1959), pp. 169–124].

Adhering to SCAR on behalf of the United States is the Committee on Polar Research of the National Academy of Sciences (Laurence M. Gould, chairman), consisting of scientists experienced in arctic and Antarctic research.

The U.S. scientific program in the Antarctic is funded and coordinated through the National Science Foundation, which set up an Antarctic research program for this purpose in its Office of Special International Programs. Thomas O. Jones is program director for Antarctic research, and J. Wallace Joyce heads the Office of Special International Programs. A. P. Crary has been designated by the director of NSF as chief scientist of the U.S. Antarctic research program.

The NSF formulates the research program for the Antarctic, with the Committee on Polar Research making broad recommendations regarding desirable goals. Through its membership in SCAR, the Committee on Polar Research keeps NSF informed of the over-all program and of the interests of other nations in Antarctic research. It also advises the foundation with respect to the international exchange of scientific personnel.

Logistics support is furnished by Support Force 43 of the U.S. Navy and continues the Navy’s long tradition of exploration and research support in Antarctica. The full support operation is under the command of Read Adm. David M. Tyree.

The Interdepartmental Committee on Antarctic Research (ICA) consists of representatives of federal agencies with research interests in Antarctica, serves as an advisory group to the foundation in coordinating the government’s interests.

The foundation works with the National Academy—Research Council and the Department of State in implementing exchanges of scientific personnel between Antarctic stations of the U.S. and those of other countries and consults with the department in all other matters in which U.S. policy may be involved.

The foundation receives proposals for research in the Antarctic region from universities, research institutions, learned societies, and federal agencies. All proposals are reviewed by the NSF scientific staff and are also referred for comment to the Committee on Polar Research and, as appropriate, to the Interdepartmental Committee on Antarctic Research, as well as to other groups. The NSF keeps the two committees informed regarding the award of grants and contracts for polar research.

In striving to develop a balanced research program in the Antarctic, the foundation looks for advice and suggestions not only to the national scientific community but to the international scientific community as well. The Antarctic is one of the best examples in the world today of the effective cooperation that can be achieved by scientists of many nations and widely divergent political persuasions.—Ed.

The two articles on current research in Antarctica which appeared in *Science* [130, 1748 (25 Dec. 1959); 131, 21 (1 Jan. 1960)] should be of value in informing the scientific community.
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