

neighbourhood. Discussions are at present proceeding between the Ministry of Works and the learned societies, and the Government has decided not to proceed with the Science Centre scheme in its original form.

### Book Exports

REPLYING to a question in the House of Commons on July 28, Mr. Ian Harvey, Joint Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said the Government was seeking to negotiate a British book export scheme with Turkey, and this was under consideration by the Turkish Government. Israel at present allocated some 500,000 dollars a year from its foreign exchange resources for the import of books and periodicals and a proportion of this was spent on imports from the United Kingdom. Indonesian imports were limited by fiscal and exchange controls, but Indonesia was able to include requests for technical books in its requirements for supplies from the United Kingdom under the Technical Co-operation Scheme of the Colombo Plan.

### Baghdad Pact Nuclear Training Centre

In a written answer to a question in the House of Commons on July 28, Commander Noble, Minister of State, stated that from the establishment of the Baghdad Pact Nuclear Training Centre in Baghdad in January 1957 to date Britain had contributed £71,722, of which £23,131 was for initial equipment and freight, £23,421 for the staff from the United Kingdom and £25,170 was towards the annual running expenses of the Centre, including the cost of certain training facilities in the United Kingdom, and of replacement and supplementary equipment.

### Academic Administration

AN article in *The Economist* for July 12, entitled "Professors under Pressure", directs attention to the way in which administrative duties interfere with the teaching and research work of professors in large departments which may comprise 200-300 undergraduates, twenty or thirty academic staff and post-graduate students, twenty or more technical and office staff, an annual maintenance budget of perhaps £5,000, and a postal turnover of 4,000-5,000 items a year. The situation is likely to worsen with the increased responsibilities for dealing with new buildings—science blocks, research laboratories, lecture halls and halls of residence—which university expansion must throw on professors over the next ten years. Urging the need for fresh thinking about the organization of the university, both academic and administrative, and for a determined effort to relate the function of a university to its optimum size, and its organization to its function, the article suggests that the head of a large science department should be redesignated 'chairman' and relieved of moral responsibility for teaching and research, the title 'professor' being retained to denote scholarship and research ability.

### Protection of Antarctic Fauna

THE need for measures to be taken to preserve birds in the areas of the Antarctic now being visited by man was among other subjects discussed at the Eleventh International Conference of the International Committee for Bird Preservation held in Helsinki in June last. It was agreed by the representatives of twenty countries present to urge that the question of the protection of indigenous fauna, and in

particular the much threatened endemic bird fauna, be placed on the agenda of the conference on the future status of Antarctica, for which President Eisenhower and the U.S. Department of State are issuing invitations.

### Age Structure in the Engineering Industry

A PRELIMINARY study of age structure in the engineering industry showed that the age of men working at a job is likely to be determined largely by difficulties inherent in the job. This investigation was conducted in the south-west of England. To support the hypothesis that the nature of the work is a major determinant of the age of those engaged in it, similar investigations have been carried out by K. F. H. Murrell and S. Grew of the Unit for Research on Employment of Older Workers, University of Bristol, in other parts of the country (*Occupational Psychology*, 32, No. 2, April, 1958). A number of firms throughout Great Britain were invited by the Institution of Works Managers to submit nominal rolls of their employees. In all, 25 firms, situated in the South Midlands, Yorkshire and Lancashire, and the London region, sent the information required. The nominal rolls included the age and occupation of each man. Although the firms which participated cannot be regarded as a random sample of firms in the engineering industry, they were sufficiently diverse in size, organization and product to be regarded as a fair cross-section of firms in the industry. In no case was the difference in mean ages of a pair of regions significant at above the 5 per cent level. This indicated that the regional samples were likely to have been drawn from the same population, and suggested that there are probably no important regional differences in the age distribution of the working population in the engineering industry. This supports the general conclusion made from the original survey.

### Colonial Development Corporation

THE report and accounts of the Colonial Development Corporation for the year ended December 31, 1957 (pp. v+64. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1958. 4s. net), record a net profit of £732,868, compared with £572,809 in 1956, but the net operating profit fell from £371,718 to £227,909. The fall in commodity prices had serious effects, Macalder Nyanza Mines, Ltd. (copper), showing a loss of £207,505. Four projects just coming into production or operation showed losses but should do better on full-scale working: British Honduras Fruit Co., Ltd., Kasungu Tobacco Estates, Vipya Tung Estates, and Nigeria Housing Development Society, Ltd. There are now 76 continuing projects, compared with 66, and three of the ten new projects were on the Corporation's initiative by extension of existing ones; 42 schemes were under investigation at the end of the year and gross new expenditure during the year was £7 million. Commenting on the Overseas Resources Development Act, 1958, which raises the ceiling for the Corporation's borrowing from £100 million to £150 million, the report reiterates that financing of overseas risk-bearing projects solely by repayable loan capital is unsound, and urges as from 1951 a clean start with relief from existing obligations to service capital, and cancellation of equivalent debt to Government, with a note in the accounts recording the writing off of the £8 million. A further reference to the fall in commodity prices emphasizes that this