

the "think tanks" and Federal Contract Research Centers which work for the Department of Defense. One of the things bothering senators is the fact that scientists can earn more in these research centers than they can working for the government. In response to senatorial questioning, Foster said that the highest paid employee of these centers is the president of Aerospace, I. A. Getting, who is paid \$90,000 annually. He and 11 other presidents and vice

presidents of these 16 centers are former employees of the Defense Department.

"How do you keep research people working for the government?" Senator Karl Mundt (R-S.D.) asked Foster. "By resigning and taking their pension they can get \$55,000 to \$90,000 for doing the same kind of work for the same employer under the imprimatur of a different organization."

The senators also questioned the

value of the work done by the "think tanks" and cited the General Accounting Office's recent unfavorable comments on the Hudson Institute's studies on civil defense (*Science*, 5 April). After Fulbright mentioned that Herman Kahn, director of the Hudson Institute, had gone to Vietnam recently to advise about pacification, Mundt interjected: "I would rather take the judgment of a Taiwanese by the name of Joe China-

Micro-Revolt of the Microbiologists over Detrick Tie

At the annual meeting of the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) held in Detroit this month, outgoing ASM president Salvador E. Luria of M.I.T. stirred up a small storm of protest when he announced in his outgoing presidential address that the ASM's advisory committee to the U.S. Army's Biological Laboratories at Fort Detrick, Maryland, would be disbanded.

In itself, the dissolution of the Detrick advisory committee was not so controversial. Members of the committee* had unanimously recommended that it be discontinued because they felt it was not "serving a real advisory function as presently constituted." This action had been approved by a unanimous vote of the Council, the governing body of the ASM. What bothered some of the ASM members was the fact that Luria, in his address on 7 May, had linked the cutting of the ASM's ties with Detrick to the moral responsibility of the scientist and had said that "the ethical problems implicit in the association of a professional society with the defense establishment have always been present in the minds of the officers of the Society and have often been debated in its Councils." Some ASM members felt that Luria had misrepresented their 12,000-member organization as being ethically opposed to the connection with Detrick (the Army's biological warfare center).

At the ASM's business meeting the following day, Merrill J. Snyder, of the University of Maryland Hospital at Baltimore, said he was "shocked" by Luria's address, and introduced a resolution to reappoint the advisory committee to Detrick. This resolution passed by a vote of 172 to 58. In one of a number of telephone interviews conducted by *Science* in preparing this story, Snyder said, "I don't think that this introduction of the moral issue is in keeping with the views of the membership." Since a resolution to eliminate the Detrick advisory committee was defeated at last year's business meeting, it would seem that a majority, at least of those who attend business meetings, wishes to retain the Detrick tie.

One of the complaints of some Detrick advisory committee members was that the Army did not consult the committee on policy or on the development of specific biological weapons. Outgoing ASM president Luria told *Science* that some members felt the Detrick advisory committee had only a "peripheral" role for both Detrick and the ASM. Luria said that, for him, Detrick was "a moral issue," but he added, "I am not at all sure that my remarks represent the majority of the society."

Detrick's scientific director Riley D. Housewright (who served as president of ASM in 1966) told *Science* that he attributed the disbandment of the advisory committee to two causes. First, he said, "it is a sign of the times." He listed the Vietnam war and the increased concern about the use of biological and chemical weapons as factors contributing to the committee's dissolution. Second, Housewright said, "there are those who say that professional societies shouldn't advise federal agencies." He added that he thought many of these people would, however, "respond to a call from Jim Shannon to advise on infectious diseases for NIH." Housewright added that there were 100 members of the ASM at Detrick, more than at any other institution in the nation, and that several hundred microbiologists had directly benefited, educationally and professionally, from their work at Detrick.

The fact that the leaders of the ASM have chosen to end their organization's 13-year advisory relationship with Detrick is an indication of a shift in attitudes of a portion of the scientific community. But the fact that ASM members have urged the reinstatement of the Detrick advisory committee is a significant reminder that many scientists have not changed their minds about military-oriented research.

The Council, as the governing body of the ASM, is free to act as it pleases on the question of the Detrick advisory committee. However, Luria and others who advocated dissolution were sufficiently impressed by their opponents' ardor to suggest that the entire ASM membership be polled on the question of the Detrick relationship. In the American Society for Microbiology, as in other scientific organizations, the development of an appropriate relationship to military research will continue to be a subject for soul-searching and debate.

—BRYCE NELSON

* The membership of the most recent ASM advisory committee to Fort Detrick was as follows: J. W. Moulder, University of Chicago (chairman); Robert Austrian, University of Pennsylvania Hospital; H. S. Ginsberg, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; Vernon Knight, Baylor University; D. J. Merchant, University of Michigan; E. J. Ordal, University of Washington; W. R. Romig, University of California, Los Angeles; W. F. Scherer, Cornell University Medical College; and J. B. Wilson, University of Wisconsin.