

feeding the skepticism that many politicians and federal administrators already feed toward this clamoring ward of government.

At the Bureau of the Budget, which will set the amounts to be cut from each agency after Congress passes all the appropriations bills (which is expected to be in early August, prior to the start

of the Republican National Convention), officials reiterated Hornig's view about the importance of protecting graduate education. "We're all aware of the graduate school problem," one official said, "and we're going to do everything possible to protect the schools." How would this be done? "Well, we don't know precisely, but

before we cut into the graduate schools, we'll cut down on equipment purchases, travel, and nonprofessional assistance."

Thus, at this point details are lacking, but throughout the federal establishment there is a uniform message for those who are dependent on government funds: prepare for less.

—DANIEL S. GREENBERG

## Scientists in Politics: Humphrey Trails McCarthy in Support

Vice President Humphrey's efforts to enlist mass support within the scientific community appear at this point to be largely unsuccessful.

Whether such support matters is a separate question. But politicians behave as though they think it does. In recent months, the McCarthyites have been claiming that their man is heir to the spirit and many of the alumni of the 1964 campaign's Scientists and Engineers for Johnson-Humphrey, a nationwide organization that numbered some 50,000 members. On the basis of reports trickling in from chapters throughout the country, they say, they have signed up at least 5000 cash-

contributing members within the scientific community—possibly as many as 10,000. These include many leaders of the 1964 Johnson-Humphrey organization, among whom is a generous sprinkling of key figures in the science-government relationship throughout the postwar period (*Science* 24 May).

Confronted with these claims, the Humphrey camp exuded confidence about the rolls of scientific supporters that it would produce, but no names. That is, until last week, when it listed some 60 persons, many of them academics, who will serve on advisory task forces for the Vice President,\* plus two smaller groups that Humphrey aides said will serve as the nuclei of organizing committees of Scientists and Engineers for Humphrey and Physicians for Humphrey.†

However, amidst a fair amount of confusion, one of the alleged organizers, Philip Handler, who chairs both the Duke biochemistry department and the National Science Board, immediately disavowed any connection with the campaign on the grounds that scientists should not involve their profession in partisan politics.

Since it is now a well-established pattern for the scientific professions to involve themselves in presidential campaigning, Handler's disavowal has a ring of irrelevance. But if he was ever involved in the Humphrey campaign, and he says he wasn't, he is now clearly uninvolved.

Nevertheless, the episode is worth examining in some detail for several reasons. First of all, Handler views the role of scientists in elective politics with considerable personal experience, having served in 1964 as head of the North Carolina chapter of Scientists and Engineers for Johnson-Humphrey. At that time, he was vice chairman of the National Science Board; subsequently, he was elevated to chairman of the NSB and also became a member of the President's Science Advisory Committee. At present, Handler's name is frequently mentioned in connection with a number of top level positions that will open within the next few years, among them the presidency of the National Academy of Sciences, the directorship of the National Science Foundation, and head of the White House science office.

After a Humphrey aide listed Handler as a member of the organizing committee, an acquaintance of Handler told *Science* that the listing was in error. An inquiry to the Humphrey camp produced an insistence that Handler had accepted membership with enthusiasm, and this was supported by a copy of a letter, dated 4 June, that Handler wrote to a Humphrey aide in response to an invitation to serve on the organizing committee of Scientists and Engineers for Humphrey. Handler's letter stated, in part, "Shortly after President Johnson announced his plans, I wired Vice President Humphrey indicating my hope that he would enter the campaign, offering my services, and. . .

"Recently," the letter went on, when called by a member of the Humphrey staff, "I happily agreed to his invitation to be among a small group of scientists, physicians, and engineers who would organize to support Mr. Humphrey."

Handler added, however, that "I am suggesting that Scientists, Engineers, and Physicians for Humphrey would do little or nothing to affect the outcome

\* Among those listed as task force members are: Doak Barnett, Emile Benoit, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Marshall D. Shulman, and W. Howard Wriggins, all of Columbia University; Robert Bowie, Hollis B. Chenery, John Dunlop, Otto Eckstein, Walter P. Falcon, Lester Gordon, Sam Huntington, Edward S. Mason, Richard A. Musgrave, Arthur Smithies, and James Q. Wilson, all of Harvard; Robert Baldwin, University of Wisconsin; George Brandow, Penn State; Kenneth Clark, City University of New York; Richard N. Cooper and John Montias, Yale University; Bayless Manning, Stanford; William Griffith, Everett E. Hagen, Paul McAvoy, Max Millikan, and Lucian W. Pye, MIT; Melvin Rothbaum, University of Illinois, and Seymour Worfbein, Temple.

† Members of the organizing committee of Scientists and Engineers were listed as: Wallace Brode, past president of the AAAS; David Z. Robinson, NYU vice president for academic affairs; James A. Van Allen, University of Iowa, and Sewall Wright, professor emeritus of genetics at the University of Wisconsin. Among those listed as members of the organizing committee of Physicians for Humphrey were John Rock, emeritus professor at Harvard; Helen Taussig, emeritus professor at Johns Hopkins; Elliott Corday, past president of the American College of Cardiology, and Robert Aldrich, professor of medicine at the University of Washington.

of the convention, and, if it is to be maximally effective in the election campaign, should not be announced until after the convention."

Handler told *Science* that after sending the 4 June letter, he called a member of the Humphrey staff and said that he did not want to serve at all. Humphrey aides say that they talked to Handler after receiving the letter, told him that they needed him at once, and not just after the convention, and that he agreed to serve, with announcement of his acceptance to be made before the convention.

In any case, on 3 July, Handler, in a letter ringing with statesmanship, took himself out of presidential politics. "I have become increasingly aware," he wrote to a member of the Humphrey staff, "that the organization of partisan groups of scientists supporting individual candidates for high political office threatens to generate serious rifts in the scientific community, 'dividing the house' as it were, whereas the issues which separate them are entirely external to science itself and indeed external to the application of scientific solutions to the problems of our nation. Accordingly," he continued, "I now consider the formation of such groups to be ill-advised and, potentially, a disservice to our society. Scientists, like all other citizens, are free to engage in political campaigns. But they should

do so as citizens, with other citizens, not as scientists."

Handler added, "Should political campaigns continue to include such organized groups of partisan scientists, it is inevitable that national attitudes and federal support for science must also come to involve political considerations. Appointments of scientists to administrative posts in science-using agencies and appropriations for federal support of science will surely be influenced by the political activities of those concerned. And our nation will suffer. . . .

"Finally, I must record my personal position," Handler's letter continued. "In addition to all the considerations above, as chairman of the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation, it would be particularly inappropriate for me to be associated with the formation of Scientists, Engineers, and Physicians for any candidate. The National Science Foundation is essentially non-political. It would be a disservice to the Nation for me to jeopardize, in any way, the future of this agency by personally engaging in partisan politics on the national scene."

And that settles the matter: Handler is not working for Humphrey. Why did he undergo what appears to be a change of mind? Handler says that upon reflection he independently came to the conclusions stated in his letter. He says he

did not discuss the matter with anyone, and emphatically denies that his decision was affected by expressions against political involvement currently coming from such elder statesmen as Frederick Seitz, president of the Academy, and Leland J. Haworth, director of NSF.

Meanwhile, the Humphrey camp, citing the many good works that the Vice President has accomplished in behalf of science and education, confidently proclaims great, though unspecified, support throughout the scientific and academic communities, and in anticipation of beating McCarthy, predicts that Humphrey will pick up the support that has rallied to the Minnesota senator.

Perhaps. But the scientists who have flocked to McCarthy did not do so because of his record on science and education; by any measure, Humphrey has an unbeatable record in those fields. Rather, they are acting out of revulsion toward the administration's Vietnam record, and Humphrey himself has said that he is not going to disavow a policy that he so ebulliently supported over 4 long years. If it ends up as a Nixon-Humphrey race, it is quite likely that some of McCarthy's scientists and engineers would go to work for the Vice President, but at present, political activism within the scientific community appears to be mainly in behalf of the McCarthy candidacy.—D.S.G.

## **Irradiated Food: FDA Blocks AEC, Army Requests for Approval**

For over 10 years, the Army and the Atomic Energy Commission have been studying the preservation of food by radiation. They claim that exposing food to radiation greatly increases its shelf life, prevents spoilage, and kills harmful insects and microorganisms without loss of nutritional quality or flavor. And it is clearly established, they contend, on the basis of their decade of research, that irradiated food is safe for human consumption.

However, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which must pass on irradiated food before it may go on the market, is not so sure. This has

led to another of the increasingly common clashes between proponents of new technology and the federal regulatory agencies charged with protecting the public welfare.

In mid-April, FDA refused to approve for human consumption irradiated canned ham that had been developed by the Army. The Army claimed that the ham could be kept unrefrigerated for several years and would be particularly valuable for supplying troops on the move. A large contract had been signed with a private corporation, Irradiated Foods, Inc. (IRRADCO), that was to produce the irradi-

ated ham on a mass scale. But FDA was not convinced that the product was safe, and turned down the request for approval.

An FDA spokesman said that the rejection did not represent any "overall condemnation of irradiated foods." In fact, in 1962 FDA approved irradiated bacon, and it has also issued regulations—which is the way approval is granted—for irradiated potatoes and wheat flour. (Although quantities of these foods have been produced for military use, they have not yet been produced for the civilian market.) It appears that the rejection of the ham petition came about through a misunderstanding on both sides as to what would be acceptable data.

The Army—which has been involved in food radiation since the 1950's—submitted data from studies on feeding irradiated bacon and pork to rats, dogs, and mice as evidence that the ham was safe. Studies must be submitted for all