

firms; and information which might be obtained, in raw or interpretative form, from the oil companies.

Secretary Hickel, who has proved a tougher overseer of the oil industry than the critics who challenged his nomination imagined he ever would be, has expressed a belief that USGS should

have more information about the OCS to back up its supervisory responsibilities. He has not committed himself yet on how this should be accomplished, however. If he decides, as one step, to demand interpretative information from the oil companies, a fierce struggle of uncertain outcome is likely to ensue.

The one sure thing is that the Santa Barbara blowout has drawn for Hickel and other Interior officials a clear moral: It is better to put together the three-dimensional geologic jigsaw puzzles before oil wells are drilled on the OCS, rather than afterward.

—LUTHER J. CARTER

NSF Director: Nixon Admits He Was Wrong

Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest form of wisdom.

—EDMUND BURKE

In a remarkable reversal, President Nixon announced this week that the White House had been wrong in blocking the appointment of Franklin A. Long for political reasons as the new director of the National Science Foundation. In a 28 April meeting with members of the National Science Board and the Council of the National Academy of Sciences, Nixon said that the next NSF director would be chosen on the basis of scientific and administrative competence and would be chosen from names submitted by the National Science Board.

Not only did Nixon give dramatic affirmation to the view of the scientific community that the NSF directorship is a nonpolitical post, but he also took the unusual step last week of offering the NSF directorship to Long. Although Long said that he greatly appreciated the offer, he declined the job. Long told *Science*, "The earlier events had inescapably made me become a politically marked and polarized figure so that my presence would make both the operations of the NSF and the carrying out of its administration more difficult."

Nixon personally conveyed his change of mind to the scientific leaders at a half-hour meeting at the White House. The substance of his remarks was later transmitted to newsmen at a press briefing held by Presidential science adviser Lee A. DuBridge and press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler, and this official version was amplified for *Science* by participants in the meeting with the President.

After having told the scientists that Long had declined to take the NSF post because his name had become associated with political controversy, Nixon is reported by one scientist at the meeting to have made a statement

about Long to the effect that "Now I respect him even more."

The Nixon reversal, in the opinion of National Academy of Sciences president Frederick Seitz, "cleared the air" of the thunderstorm of criticism that had developed over the rejection of Long because of his political views, especially his reservations about ABM deployment. Seitz, who, like the other scientists who attended the White House meeting, seemed happy about the change in Nixon's decision, observed, "The President wanted the scientific community to know that he regretted the situation and wanted to make amends." Another Academy member who attended the meeting said he was "flabbergasted that the President would say, in effect, 'I goofed' and would try to make amends."

In the scientific community's lengthy battle to establish federal research funding as a nonpolitical area, the reversal of the White House veto of Long is a highly significant victory. National Science Board chairman Philip Handler observes that the Long episode marks the first time the nonpolitical nature of the NSF directorship has been really tested and affirmed.

The White House meeting on 28 April also greatly pleased the scientists because Nixon emphasized the importance he placed on the NSF, on scientific research, and on science as a means of international cooperation. "He said all the right things and he said them very well," one scientist exclaimed. DuBridge said the White House meeting also marked the first time since the Hoover Administration that the Council of the National Academy had met with a President. (The National Science Board had had an earlier meeting with Nixon on 13 February.)

At the meeting with the scientists and at the press briefing afterward, Nixon and DuBridge revealed a few

more details concerning how the original rejection of Long occurred. The gist of their explanation was that White House political aides, upset by a last-minute negative reaction from Capitol Hill, bungled the Long appointment before the President was fully aware of what was happening. One scientist who attended the meeting with Nixon said Nixon acknowledged that the Long affair had been "very badly handled" by the White House.

Long had been nominated for the directorship many weeks ago by the National Science Board, the policy-making body for NSF, and DuBridge confirmed at Monday's press briefing the report that he had personally backed Long for the job. But when Long came to Washington on 11 April, expecting to meet with the President and conclude formal negotiations, he found that the arrangements were off. Subsequently, the President, on 18 April, told a news conference that he personally had approved a decision by White House aides not to submit Long's name to him because of Long's opposition to deployment of an antiballistic missile system. The White House feared that appointment of Long might damage the Administration's efforts to win congressional approval for the ABM.

At the press briefing this past Monday, DuBridge told reporters that White House staff members, after finding opposition to Long on Capitol Hill, did not bring the matter of Long's appointment to the President for "careful consideration." DuBridge said that, although he meets with the President "on a regular basis," it proved "impossible to get all this settled" before Long's rejection became a *cause célèbre* and had to be dealt with at the President's televised news conference. DuBridge later told *Science* that he first learned of congressional objections to Long on 10 April, and that he was

unable to get to Nixon to straighten out matters before Long's arrival in Washington on 11 April. Neither DuBridge nor Ziegler, Nixon's press spokesman, would identify the White House aides or the congressional figures involved in blocking Long's appointment. The only two congressmen whom *Science* could discover in opposition to Long were Senate Republican leader Everett M. Dirksen and Representative James G. Fulton (*Science*, 25 April, page 406). Although the new NSF director must be confirmed by the Senate, the Nixon Administration does not appear greatly worried about difficulties in obtaining Senate approval.

Ziegler told reporters that, while the President originally seemed to accept the political aides' premise that Long's name should not be presented to him for the NSF post because of the political situation, he changed his mind after conversations with DuBridge. DuBridge told reporters that the President, when he looked into the matter "more carefully," realized that the qualifications for the post should involve solely the scientific competence, administrative ability, and personal characteristics of a candidate. DuBridge and Ziegler made it clear that neither party politics nor ABM considerations would be considered relevant to the choice of a new NSF director.

The President told DuBridge that he was willing to have Long's name proposed to him, and both DuBridge and Henry Kissinger, Nixon's special assistant on national security affairs, who is a long-time friend of Long's, called Long to ask him to consider taking the post, but Long declined.

The President's unusual about-face seems to have been brought about partly by the storm of protest from the scientific community. Another major factor was the effort of DuBridge, who argued his case effectively and also developed an important high-level ally in Kissinger.

The news of Long's rejection for political reasons was first publicly revealed in the 18 April issue of *Science*. The story was immediately given front-page coverage by the *New York Times* and other prominent newspapers. It provoked an overwhelmingly negative reaction from the scientific community. DuBridge told reporters that there had been considerable reaction in the scientific press, particularly *Science*, and in newspaper editorials. He also said there had been "many letters" of protest to Nixon and himself from individual scientists and various scientific bodies.

NEWS IN BRIEF

● U.S. POLICY ON CBW UNDER

FIRE: Representative Richard McCarthy (D-N.Y.), a third-term congressman who has recently taken a critical interest in chemical and biological warfare (CBW), has recommended a congressional committee to investigate U.S. policy at decision-making levels on the research, development, and use of CBW. He has also urged that a top-level interagency panel be established to review present U.S. policies on the transportation of chemical and biological warfare agents. In a press conference last week, McCarthy described efforts to gain information about U.S. policy in regard to CBW from the Pentagon, State Department, U.S. United Nations delegation, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. McCarthy said he found many discrepancies and inadequacies in the answers of the various agencies to his inquiries and, for this reason, is requesting a congressional investigation of public policy on CBW.

● THOMPSON NAMED AEC COM-

MISSIONER: Theos J. Thompson, director of the nuclear reactor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.), has been named a commissioner of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Thompson will fill the unexpired term of Gerald F. Tape, who is resigning to head Associated Universities, Inc. Thompson, who is 50 years old, has been director of M.I.T.'s nuclear reactor since 1958. He was a professor of nuclear engineering at M.I.T. from 1955 to 1958, and was on the staff of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory from 1952 to 1955. His term on the commission expires June 1971.

● NSF EXPENDITURE LIMITA-

TIONS: Although President Nixon made no cuts in the National Science Foundation's (NSF) funds in his revised budget, NSF, like most other agencies, is hedging against having limits imposed on its spending. For this reason, NSF is preparing a plan for tentative expenditure ceilings for universities holding NSF grants. These guidelines should help universities to estimate their capabilities for next year and to make commitments to faculty and students without having to wait until permanent ceilings are established at a later date. This should avert diffi-

culties, which occurred last year when universities, which had already made research commitments, were forced to cut back some of their programs. NSF spending limitations were first imposed on universities last year after Congress passed the Revenue and Expenditure Act of 1968 (the tax surcharge law), which required a total government expenditure reduction of \$6 billion.

● NSF AUTHORIZATION HEAR-

INGS: It was learned recently that Senator Edward Kennedy's (D-Mass.) subcommittee on Administrative Practices and Procedures, which oversees National Science Foundation (NSF) affairs, will hold NSF authorization hearings on 7 and 8 May.

● NASA'S SUSTAINING UNIVER-

SITY GRANTS SALVAGED: The Sustaining University Grants Program of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will be continued next year at its present \$9-million funding level. In an earlier action, a Science and Astronautics subcommittee, chaired by Representative Joseph Karth (D-Minn.), reduced NASA's sustaining university grants program for fiscal 1970 by \$6 million. The subcommittee had recommended that all of the \$3 million be earmarked for research and that no new funds be provided for training, partially on the grounds that too much emphasis was being placed on administration and management training, and not enough on predoctoral training in the space sciences. After reviewing the Nixon budget revisions, which left the sustaining university grants program untouched, the subcommittee held additional hearings, restored the funds to this year's level, and recommended that \$4 million be designated for training programs. The full committee approved the action last week. During the past 4 years NASA's sustaining university grants program declined from \$45 million in fiscal 1966 to \$9 million in fiscal 1969.

● **PHYSIOLOGY IN SPACE:** A report of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) recommends a study of the physiological effects of space travel on man. *Physiology in the Space Environment: Circulation*, vol. 1, may be obtained for \$5.50 from NAS, 2101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington.

Many prominent scientists with White House connections are also said to have called to register complaints. Among the organized groups which deplored the rejection of Long were the leadership of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Science Board, and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, the nation's largest biology group. A key role in working for a reversal of the Long decision was played by Philip Handler, chairman of the National Science Board, who managed to mobilize opposition by key scientific groups without, apparently, undercutting his ability to negotiate effectively with the White House.

While almost all those involved suffered from the original decision to block Long's appointment, the con-

cerned parties seem to have gained in prestige from the reversal of the decision on Long. DuBridge, whose advice on a major scientific post had been originally rejected by White House political aides, now emerges as a man influential enough to help convince the President that he should change a publicly announced decision which allowed political factors to affect the appointment of an NSF director. DuBridge had originally given the impression of being close to President Nixon (*Science*, '21 February). This impression was somewhat dispelled by the rejection of Long, but DuBridge's reputation now seems enhanced by his role in securing the reversal of the decision.

The scientific community has displayed unusual effectiveness in achiev-

ing its goal in the Long incident. It has been successful in giving emphasis to its view that the NSF directorship is nonpolitical and has also proved itself powerful enough to persuade the President that he made a mistake.

It is difficult for Presidents to retract their decisions in public, but it is hard to see that Nixon has done anything but help himself in reversing the Long decision. He has offended very few people, and he seems to have gained a new respect in the scientific community. Furthermore, Nixon's reversal on Long may have enhanced his reputation among the larger public. At little, if any, political cost, Nixon has shown himself to be a man who is not too proud to admit error.—PHILIP M. BOFFEY and BRYCE NELSON

Confrontation at Stanford: Exit Classified Research

Palo Alto, California. The San Francisco Bay area was the cradle of American student militancy, and, in mid-April, activists at Stanford University, halfway down the San Francisco peninsula, made a further advance in confrontation politics.

At Stanford, the precipitating issue was military research performed on the university campus and at the nearby Stanford Research Institute (SRI), which was spun off by the university shortly after World War II and is still formally controlled by the Stanford trustees. What sets the Stanford incident apart from other events in the current long hot spring of the universities was the 9-day occupation of the Applied Electronics Laboratory (AEL) on campus and the interruption of classified work being done there for the government.

The immediate sequels to the sit-in were the decision, announced late last week by Stanford's dean of engineering, to phase out most of the classified work on campus and a faculty move to overhaul guidelines and review machinery in a way that would bar almost all military research from the Stanford campus.

Protestors thus obtained major concessions on a major demand. But the

matter of the Stanford-SRI relationship remains to be dealt with by the trustees, and broader issues of student power and the whole question of the purposes of the university are far from settled as far as the militants are concerned.

Despite the frankly professed radical aims of many of the protest leaders, the Stanford confrontation would hardly have registered on a Richter scale measuring campus violence. The civility of the Stanford occupation can in large part be attributed to the tactics employed by both sides. For Stanford president Kenneth S. Pitzer, in his first year at Stanford, the occupation was obviously a time of testing. Pitzer had made it known that he regarded U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war a "blunder," and he was known to favor the elimination of classified research from the campus. Most important, he did not call in police to clear AEL, thereby avoiding creation of the cops-on-campus issue which has catalyzed student opinion against many administrations.

The protestors, on the other hand, avoided physical violence, property damage, and personal insult likely to estrange the moderates among them, antagonize noninvolved students, or

alarm the faculty. The occupiers lived with locked files of classified documents—tempting game for some of them, but they were aware that anyone who touched classified material was flirting with a federal felony charge. The protestors pledged no damage to the building and no interference with classified information, and even voted a ban on the use of drugs and alcohol in the building, in part to insure that the pledge would be kept.

Criticism of war research at SRI and on campus goes back several years, but the buildup to the occupation seems to have begun last summer when militants dug into military research at SRI and the university and publicized their findings, putting most emphasis on projects they said dealt with research on chemical and biological warfare and counterinsurgency at SRI. Discussion of military research gained some momentum in the weeks after the fall semester began, and in mid-October acting president Robert J. Glaser appointed a 12-member faculty-student committee to look at the Stanford-SRI relationship and to recommend changes which appeared desirable.

Militant students interpreted administration actions as stalling tactics, and, on 14 January, 29 students invaded a trustees' luncheon and demanded that "Stanford get out of Southeast Asia." This led to a public meeting on campus on 11 March, at which five trustees took part in a panel discussion. It was the first time the trustees had been publicly exposed to the full blast of the radical analysis of the university