

velopment to insure better products.

Besides the government regulatory agencies, Nader is also investigating the structure and nature of some of Washington's leading law firms. Nader has concentrated his initial efforts on the prestigious firm of Covington and Burling, which represents many large industries in cases involving the government. Nader says that such law firms, whose clients include trade associations and large corporations, are part of a "lobbying infrastructure"

that often works to undermine the government's responsibilities to consumers by presenting only the industries' points of view.

Nader's raiders had some serious problems this past summer in obtaining information from the government for the Center's study. Before the summer ended, the group charged that some regulatory agencies had withheld information, given preferential treatment to special interest groups, and deliberately evaded the group's investi-

gatory efforts by using a series of delaying tactics and attempting to snarl the investigators in red tape. At a press conference in August, Nader issued a report charging that the Freedom of Information Act, passed 2 years ago to provide for government disclosures to the public, "is being undermined by a riptide of bureaucratic ingenuity."

"The typical tactic is to delay replying for several weeks and then state that the request for information was

Senate Puts Pinch on "Pure" Science in Military Bill

Congress is taking an increasingly skeptical attitude toward Pentagon funding of "pure" science. Last week *Science* noted that the military procurement and research bill passed 6 November contains a sleeper (Section 203) which could, conceivably, end all military support of basic research, and which at least may portend some hostile investigations of selected research projects and institutions. (The section declares that Pentagon-backed research must have a "direct and apparent relationship to a specific military function or operation." *Science* 14 November.)

The same attitude shows up elsewhere in the military bill. For instance, no money is authorized for new starts under Project Themis, the 3-year-old attempt of the Defense Department to spread research funds around more broadly by sponsoring projects at universities which previously had done little or no federal research. The cutoff was sponsored by Senator J. W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) as part of his attempt to stem Pentagon support for science and foreign policy research. The practical effect is to put the future of Themis in doubt. When it was launched in 1966 under the care of John S. Foster, Jr., the director of research and engineering for the Department of Defense, the hope was to launch about 200 research projects over a 4-year period. But new starts were cut in half last year in an economy move by Foster. Defense officials say there are about 118 Themis projects at present, a number which will be gradually pruned back over the next year.

Congress cut \$926 million from the Pentagon's \$8.2 billion Research and Development budget. With a few exceptions, however, the Pentagon was not told where to make the 11-percent reductions. Basic and applied research projects are easier to trim than large engineering development efforts, according to officials in Foster's office. They predict that the research categories will thus probably have to absorb cuts of 15 percent or more.

Among the specified research and development cuts in the bill were the following:

- A cut of \$10.5 million (11 percent) in research and development on biological and new chemical warfare agents and of delivery systems for disseminating lethal chemical and biological agents.
- A cut of \$90 million in the "military sciences" grab bag of research carried out for the Defense agencies and

military departments. This cut also would cover a \$27 million (10 percent) reduction in funds for research carried out at the federal contract research centers, the termination of new starts for Project Themis, and other cuts directed by Fulbright in a Senate amendment 12 August (*Science* 22 August).

The Senate conferees sought without success to apply item-by-item reductions to the Research and Development budget. But, complained Senator Thomas J. McIntyre (D-N.H.) on 7 November, "lack of time, lack of staff, and lack of expertise pitted against the Pentagon's legions of experts [who were backed by the House conferees] frustrated our attempts." As a result of McIntyre's "unequal battle" with the Pentagon, the Senate Armed Services Committee may add several professional staff members to go over the R & D budget more carefully next year.

All things considered, including the climate on campuses, "it is going to be a really difficult year in this whole area" of academic research, according to John F. Morse, director of the Commission on Federal Relations of the American Council on Education.

But apart from the question of academic research for the military, the outcome of this year's "great debate" on the Pentagon was a letdown for those members of Congress who wish to curb the budgets and influence of the military. They were disappointed in the final version of the military procurement and research bill, which was weaker at several points than the Senate version. Restrictions on testing and transporting lethal chemical and biological weapons were relaxed (*Science* 14 November). The General Accounting Office was denied subpoena power for a study of defense industry profits, except selectively as authorized by the Armed Services Committees. Former military officers and Department of Defense officials doing business with the Government will have to file public reports, but in the final version of the bill they need not report what sort of work they are doing. The final version of the bill also left out a provision which would have required the General Accounting Office to make a quarterly review and report on major Defense contracts. Finally, no major weapons system sought by the Administration was cut back and, indeed, the bill authorized an extra \$400 million for new ships not in the President's budget.—ANDREW HAMILTON