

programs, a job placement service, and athletics (partly supported from the general fund), while recruitment of black students suffered for lack of money.

Virtually all candidates running in an upcoming student government election supported the BAM demands. And numerous campus groups, including ENACT, sponsor of Michigan's recent Environmental Teach-In, also were supporting the demands. Editors of the Michigan *Daily* were giving BAM sympathetic news coverage and exhorting students to support the strike.

As the first week of the strike wore on increasing numbers of teaching assistants and professors supported the strike by canceling classes, holding classes off campus, or using class periods for discussion of the black demands. The university's black faculty members, of whom there are now more than 40, were early supporters of BAM and did missionary work for BAM within their various schools and departments. A new campus group, called the Radical College and made up of some 200 members (about half of whom are professors and teaching fellows), agreed to support the strike and said that the campaign for more black admissions marked a "beginning of the humanization of the university." The Residential College canceled its classes, and some schools and departments did likewise.

At midweek, the Senate Assembly urged the faculties of each school and

college to help the administration achieve a financial plan for 10-percent black admissions. Later, in response to an appeal from President Fleming, the schools and colleges agreed that this would be done. Here was the critical development that led to a strike settlement. It offered the university a way to meet the black demands despite its severe financial problems, which Fleming had described earlier.

The university, Fleming had said, already faces a \$1.75 million deficit; fees for out-of-state students must be increased; and a fee increase for Michigan students is likely, even if the university's new budget goes through the legislature intact—this being in doubt because it depends in part on passage of new tax measures in an election year. Also, cutbacks in federal research support are creating other difficulties.

"It is not enough," Fleming had added, "to say that the university can, if it wants, guarantee that several million dollars will be put into a black student program regardless of what other events take place in the next 4 years . . . [much] of this money must be found by rearranging internal priorities. That, in turn, takes place largely within the colleges."

After the action of the schools and colleges, BAM and the administration arrived at an understanding which the regents, meeting last week in special session, in effect ratified. Vice President

Allan F. Smith (for academic affairs) later told *Science* where the schools, colleges, and departments will look for means to support the black admissions program: Gifts and endowment income often will have to be allocated to this purpose; more research assistant positions must be assigned to the support of black graduate students; teaching loads may have to be increased to keep staff positions to a minimum; some new programs or program expansions will have to be postponed; and supporting personnel such as secretaries and laboratory assistants may have to be kept at present strength or even reduced.

While the regents deplored the disruptions that occurred during the strike and called for the drafting of policies to deal with campus strikes and boycotts, they observed that the "black students, unlike many of the white radicals who seem bent on destruction for its own sake, have been pursuing the legitimate objective of trying to make more educational opportunities available for their people."

And, clearly, it was the strike that focused the attention of the faculty on the need for changing priorities in favor of more black admissions. There no doubt will be other intrusions on the peace of the academic sanctuary, here and on other campuses, if those who dwell therein neglect to deal with social injustices that are partly within their power to correct.—LUTHER J. CARTER

HEW: What Will Decentralization Mean to Research Evaluation?

The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) presents management problems on the scale of the late Ottoman Empire, and the Nixon Administration faces a real challenge in its effort at HEW to redeem a Nixon campaign pledge of more effective government.

A main feature of this administration effort is a decentralization program which involves a major shift to regional officials of authority and responsibility for HEW's far-flung grant-in-aid programs. Among HEW's research clientele in the universities and health and welfare institutions there is rising

concern that decentralization will involve a sharp reduction in influence of the study-section review system under which professionals from outside government provide scientific evaluation of HEW research and training activities.

The decentralization program is in its early stage, and at this point changes have been made in advisory procedures in a relatively small number of research and training programs in agencies which are primarily "service-oriented." The review process for basic research programs seems unaffected. There are enough equivocal signs, how-

ever, to have set the scientific community's early-warning system buzzing.

One agency in which the effects of decentralization are taking hold is the Social and Rehabilitation Service which administers programs for special groups such as the physically handicapped, children, and the aged. A clear picture of the effects is, however, difficult to form. This reporter's attempt last week to ascertain the status of the technical advisory panels on research and training under the Older Americans Assistance Act, for example, revealed a lack of clarity in the situation. A professor who sat on one technical advisory panel said he had received a letter informing him that his panel had been dissolved and later got a phone call from a Washington functionary who said the panel might be reformed at a later date and inquired about the professor's political affiliation. A middle-level SRS administrator said both the training and research panels

NEWS IN BRIEF

● **PACKAGING POLLUTION CONTROL ACT OF 1970:** Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.) has introduced a bill that would levy a "solid waste fee" on industries for product packaging according to several criteria including the possible toxic and health effects of disposal of the package and the ease with which the package could be "recycled." The Packaging Pollution Control Act of 1970 (S. 3665) directs the HEW Secretary and the Secretary of the Treasury to make a schedule of national packaging charges that reflects the effect of each type of packaging upon the environment. The bill proposes that the national packaging charges be routed to state and local governments for the construction and expansion of solid waste facilities.

● **MARYLAND ABORTION LAW:** The Maryland legislature has passed a bill repealing all existing laws regulating abortion. Under the new law (which would be the most liberal in the nation), a woman and her physician decide when and if a pregnancy should be terminated. Any licensed doctor in the state can perform a legal abortion in any licensed hospital in the state and there is no residency requirement. The governor has not yet signed the bill.

● **INDIANS BLOCK ALASKAN PIPELINE:** A federal judge has granted a temporary restraining order prohibiting the Secretary of the Interior from issuing permits for the construction in Alaska of an oil pipeline and a road parallel to it. The judge ruled that the pipeline and road may not be run across Stevens Village without the consent of the 66 Indians who live there. The judge said he would reconsider his temporary order in 10 days. During the hearing, the director of the Geological Survey filed a memo with the court saying the design of the pipeline was not acceptable for Alaska's sensitive and shifting tundra. His points and the court order will, according to an Interior Department official, delay the issuance of permits indefinitely.

● **NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL:** Four government agencies have recommended to the Atomic Energy Commission changes in the disposal of radioactive wastes. The agencies criticized the AEC for not insuring against leakage of atomic wastes into under-

ground aquifers, and suggested new techniques of burial. The Bureau of Radiological Health, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Federal Water Pollution Control Administration collaborated on the report at the instigation of Senator Frank Church (D-Idaho), in whose state is one of the waste disposal sites.

● **CLEAN AIR CAR RACE:** College groups will race 30 to 40 low-pollution vehicles from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to the California Institute of Technology this summer in the second transcontinental clean air car race. The race, which is being organized by students from these two schools, will begin 24 August and will be run in six legs, each terminating on the campus of some college or university. Scoring will be based partially on the vehicles' emission of pollutants.

● **END OF EXPLORER 1:** Explorer 1, the first American earth satellite and the oldest man-made object in space, plunged back into the atmosphere on 1 April and burned over the Pacific Ocean. Explorer 1 was launched from Cape Canaveral by a makeshift combination of 16 military rockets on 31 January 1958. It recorded peculiar bands of radiation encircling the earth which later became known as the Van Allen belts.

● **ERIE FISHING CURBED:** The Canadian government has banned the sale and export of walleyed pike, perch, and pickerel from Lake Erie because of poisonous mercury found in the fish. Initial testing of the fish showed, according to a Canadian official, that fish in Lake St. Clair (a small lake connecting lakes Huron and Erie) contained 1.3 parts per million of mercury. Fish in Lake Erie near the St. Clair end have shown the same amount, which exceeds by 0.8 part per million the legal maximum. Ontario Premier John Robarts is seeking a meeting with the governor of Michigan to determine how to end the pollution. Chemical and paper processing plants are suspected of discharging mercury into the lakes. Fishermen are being allowed to freeze their catches until more thorough testing is done. Despite Lake Erie's badly polluted condition, about 50 million pounds of fish are caught from it each year.

were still functioning. An upper-level official in HEW looked into the matter and came back with a general reply that an effort was being made to streamline SRS advisory apparatus and that some functions, such as the authority to continue some training grants, were being delegated to regional offices under the decentralization program. At the very least it appears that a communications gap exists.

Policy-level officials at HEW, including deputy undersecretary Fred V. Malek, say that efforts are being made to modernize the research advisory apparatus and to put more emphasis on staff decisions at the regional level. But they stress that the programs involved are "people-oriented" programs which provide primarily for the delivery of services. Research and training funded under these programs are expected to support the service function directly. The consensus within HEW, they say, is that basic research will not lend itself to decentralized management. Basic research, however, has not yet been given the kind of close examination that service programs have, but the subject of basic research grant administration is scheduled for early scrutiny, and one gets the impression that the prevailing HEW attitude is that nothing is sacred.

The administration effort to gain influence over the advisory apparatus and the decentralization itself should be considered in light of the special difficulties a new Republican administration faces in taking over control of the federal establishment. Republicans have occupied the White House for only 9 of the last 33 years. Most legislation expanding the federal role in domestic affairs was enacted under the Democrats, and the federal bureaucracy bears, so to speak, the Democrats' trademark. The number of appointive jobs at the policy level are limited, and many key management posts are occupied by career civil servants, so the incoming Republicans find themselves with frustratingly little leverage. Furthermore, because of the budget squeeze, this is an inopportune time to interpose a layer of new jobs for loyalists, as sometimes has been done in an effort to overcome inertia. The Administration is left with reorganization as the avenue to change, and decentralization at HEW follows this route.

HEW is a loose confederation of agencies whose programs proliferated during the New Frontier-Great Society

era. These agencies administer programs ranging in size from the huge Medicare and big aid-to-education operations to very small and specialized research and community-action projects. In general, the structure and operations of HEW agencies have been heavily influenced by the professionals in the fields they serve.

Better Ways To Govern

Shortly after he took office, President Nixon outlined some of the things he expects his administration to do in "finding better ways to govern." His 27 March 1969 "Statement on Restructuring Government Service Systems" focused on "social and economic services," and it was obvious he had HEW, a major dispenser of such services, very much in mind.

Nixon enunciated a trinity of principles for reform: "rationalization, coordination and decentralization." To rationalize HEW's sprawling field operations Nixon declared that uniform boundaries for regions should be established for all agencies in HEW and in the departments of Labor and of Housing and Urban Development, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Small Business Administration. To foster interagency and intra-agency cooperation he also ordered uniform locations for field offices for social and economic programs which require coordination between federal agencies or among different levels of government. A major effort is to be made to bring state and local officials together with federal officials from different agencies to develop viable regional plans. Planning, up to now, has been pretty much what one official called an "ad lib process." So changes seem overdue.

Decentralization, of course, is hardly a new theme in the federal government, and, in fact, efforts at HEW decentralization were made in the last administration. Regional offices have been notoriously deficient, however, in both authority and capabilities. HEW clients habitually make end runs around regional officials to argue their cases in Washington. And since decisions and careers are made in Washington, the regional offices have been professional backwaters.

The evidence indicates, nonetheless, that the Nixon Administration is in earnest about decentralization. To oversee the effort from Washington, it has named, as director of the office of field coordination, William J. Page, 39, a winner this year of the National

Civil Service League Award, who came to the Washington job after a term as HEW regional director in Atlanta, where he earned recognition as a highly effective administrator.

A key tenet of the decentralization plan is to give prime authority over regional programs to the regional director rather than to the chief regional representatives of individual HEW agencies. To strengthen regional capabilities, some new posts with upper-level civil service ratings have been assigned to regional office and some upper-grade employees will be transferred from Washington to the regions. Regional directors will also have more authority than in the past in hiring, and more flexibility than their predecessors had when it comes to requirements to fill jobs from within agency ranks.

Critics of the program say that decentralization could precede "politicization." Five new directors in the eight regions have been named since the change of administration, and the critics contend that these appointments were "more political" than in the past. It seems to be the case that political inputs in the selection of HEW regional directors are not really new. But given his expanded powers, a politically motivated regional director might conceivably turn his region into a patronage fiefdom. Page and others deny that this is the intention of the Administration or even a possibility under Civil Service restraints, but it is one aspect of decentralization that is sure to be watched.

It should be noted that the HEW decentralization is not being carried forward on a populist or "power-to-the-people" impulse. The aim is both to improve efficiency and to better the performance of the department in achieving priorities established by the Secretary. The feeling is that the sub-agencies have gone along administering their own programs in a way that often contributes little to achievement of the goals of the agencies, and it is closer management of the subagencies that is a major objective of decentralization.

It would be fair to describe the new policy makers at HEW as more interested in management in the sense of making the department a more efficiently functioning overall system than their predecessors, who tended to stress the individual subagency doing its problem solving within a particular professional framework. The new management's view is expressed in an Operational Planning System for which

detailed guidelines were announced on 26 March. HEW managers are required to set up formal goals and priorities and a plan for achieving them. The HEW rank and file has seen reorganization and restructuring plans come and go and views them skeptically as a kind of managerial mumbo-jumbo, but the new model at HEW has performance criteria written into it, and this could make a difference.

A FAST Look

In the preparations for decentralization, a decisive role seems to have been assigned to a Federal Assistance Task Force (FAST) which has been looking in detail for a year at all of HEW's grant-in-aid programs. The FAST group is headed by Fred V. Malek, HEW deputy undersecretary, who has emerged in HEW as a chief administrative troubleshooter and straw boss.

The FAST group has so far looked at about 70 of the more than 200 HEW grant programs, considering all aspects, including internal and external review committees. Funds under many of the programs are distributed by formula, but in the case of programs with R & D and training provisions, as one official said, "there is much more discretion in how they are administered."

The general reaction of the FAST group to the review apparatus for the service-oriented programs was that it is overgrown. In some cases they said they found several layers of review committees whose deliberations slowed action on projects but almost never affected or changed a decision. Elsewhere they found review committees surviving when their original purpose has been accomplished. They found other review committees to be rubber-stamping staff recommendations; sometimes they found staff people using a review committee as a screen to hide behind to avoid responsibility. In short, FAST recommended consolidation of review functions, delegation of authority for extensions of some programs to regional staff, and in general a simplification of procedures. As one observer put it, action to simplify is a way "to earn Brownie points at the White House."

The attitude at the top was expressed by President Nixon in his remarks when he signed the Community Mental Health Center Amendments of 1970 (P.L. 91-211) on 16 March. Among his reservations to the bill he expressed regret that "the bill would

require that every individual grant for construction or staffing of community mental health centers be approved by the National Health Advisory Council.

"While we support a role for the Advisory Council on the development of broad policy and recommendations on research and training grants," he said, "this procedure will complicate the decision process and create unnecessary barriers to the development of comprehensive community health programs."

The President wound up the statement by saying he was asking the Secretary of HEW "to submit legislation to repeal the requirement that all grants be approved by the National Advisory Mental Health Council."

The advisory council to which the President referred represents one of the two main types of outside advisory committees serving federal agencies. The advisory councils are prescribed in many laws which HEW administers and were created to give policy guidance to agency heads. Members of the councils are usually citizens selected for their prominence or, since membership is mildly honorific, named as a form of political reward. Many groups are required by law to approve all grants made under the law they advise on, but usually they follow staff recommendations.

These advisory councils are not the

same as the study sections or technical advisory committees, whose members are selected for their competence in a particular discipline or research field and are widely used in HEW and other agencies to evaluate research applications. Unlike the advisory councils, the study sections do not have statutory basis. They are created administratively and can be dissolved in the same way.

Advisory panels deal both with research closely connected to service programs and with basic research. And the current anxiety in the HEW research community boils down to a fear that the Administration's streamlining attitude toward the advisory councils and study sections which deal with applied research may be extended to the basic research review process.

Malek, in response to questions from *Science*, said that his group was looking at all grant programs, but, he said, "we all realize" that basic research tends to be "so esoteric and complex" that it would be inappropriate to decentralize the review process.

Malek said he knew that "some people are unhappy," and that, because of the pressure of time, "we have not done an information job on interest groups." He said he thought more information would "put out the fires." "Our motives on this are very pure," he commented.

The Malek task force is to continue work for another year, and basic research has a prominent place on the agenda.

Answers to questions addressed to officials at NIH and the National Institute of Mental Health and to university-based members of study sections, about the effects of decentralization on basic research advisory panels, indicate that review procedures on basic research have so far not been affected. The "so far" is significant, since there is awareness that basic research is under study.

The peer-group system of evaluating research proposals has never been without critics. The system probably worked most satisfactorily in a period when a substantial annual growth factor in the research budget could be relied on. There are complaints now that the system slights younger men and new areas of research. It is fair to say, however, that a majority of scientists believe the study-section review is still the best way to insure scientific quality and fairness in the grant-making process.

During the 1968 campaign, President Nixon said "the need is not to dismantle government but modernize it." Until the Administration makes clearer its intentions on scientific review, a lot of scientists will be waiting for the other shoe to drop.—JOHN WALSH

Arms Talks: In-Group Debate on the Technical Issues

For the United States, international arms control negotiations have always been preceded by extensive negotiations within the government on what the American position should be. As the 16 April deadline for strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) with the Soviet Union approaches, the Nixon Administration has been engaged in surfacing and settling internal disputes on the objective of the talks. Interested parties outside the administrative bureaucracy, including the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and academic specialists in disarmament, are concerned that their

side of the argument may not be getting a fair hearing. They discern a battle between, on one side, the Pentagon leadership, which seems to prefer arrangements that will permit continued qualitative improvements in strategic arms, and, on the other side, a murky, and perhaps weak coalition of forces within the Administration which favors arrangements that will restrict the arms race qualitatively as well as quantitatively (*Science*, 27 March).

There are two fundamental questions at issue. The basic question is whether the United States should aim for a

freeze on strategic weapons deployments and characteristics at the current level, or should be willing to allow each side to install antiballistic missile systems (ABM's) and multiple, individually targeted warhead systems (MIRV's) for offensive missiles. The former position is favored by those, in and out of government, who want to freeze the arms race; the latter position is favored by those who feel it is necessary to proceed with the development of new generations of strategic arms (*Science*, 27 March).

The Administration's decision on the basic question appears to turn on the issue of verification, which means the ability of U.S. officials to establish with reasonable confidence that the Soviet Union will not secretly develop and install weapons which could upset the strategic balance. If the Administration concludes that elaborate on-site inspection would be required to police a freeze, then the odds of agreement